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THE ANGLER'S
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POCKET-BOOK;

OR, COMPLETE
ENGLISH ANGLER:

Containing every thing necessary in that Art.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

NOBBS'S

Celebrated Treatise

ON THE

ART OF TROLLING.



NORWICH:

PRINTED BY J. PAYNE, MARKET-PLACE;

FOR MESSRS. WEST AND HUGHES, NO. 40, PATER-NOSTER ROW.
LONDON, AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

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THE

BOOK



ENGLISH

CHILDREN

AND

AMERICAN

PRINTED BY J. B. LIPPINCOTT, PHILADELPHIA

FOR THE AMERICAN BOOK CONCERN, NEW YORK

1854

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To the Reader.



THE following Opusculc, or Essay on Angling, is not compiled from any work extant, but is a plain and candid narration of matter of fact, founded on many years' experience. By its assistance, any one may become an expert Angler in a short time, which is the principal object in the endeavors of

Your Humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

1990年 9月 6日

THE
ENGLISH ART
OF
ANGLING.

THE MINOW & LOACH

ARE found in gentle streams, as soon as Spring approaches; they bite all day long at bottom. Plumb the depth (as in Remark the 2d.) They must be fished for with a very fine rod, a single hair line, and a very small hook: Small red worms, gentles, paste made of flower and water with clean hands, are the best baits.

THE GUDGEON.

Frequents a gravelly bottom, is fished for with a very fine rod, a single hair line, &c. as for Minow, as near the bottom as possible. A small red, or blood worm, is the best bait. At the least motion of the float, the Angler must strike gently, so that the float does not come above a span out of the water: if the fish be not hooked, let it sink imme-

diately to the same place. To take a great many, it is necessary to rake the bottom every ten minutes, with a garden rake; and fish directly on the spot. Contrary to other fish, the Gudgeon, by disturbing the water, bites best in the place thus disturbed.

THE BLEAK

Is a river fish, may be fished for with the same rod and line as the foregoing: he is found every where in clear water, but never among weeds: he bites at all sorts of small insects, at mid water, or deeper; at paste, which must be as white as snow, in shape and size of a hemp-seed: very small red, or blood worms, and gentles, are also excellent baits. When the Angler sees him pursuing insects at the top of the water, then he ought to change his line for a fly line, that has neither float nor lead, and bait with a natural or artificial fly, or both together, if small, answers sometimes beyond belief; or he may use a fine line with three or four hooks, so they are very small, which method is called whipping for Bleak, and is a favourite diversion. One that is expert, may take many dozen in a short time.

ROACH

Is fished for with a rod somewhat stronger, and with a stiffer tip; the line should be short to be handy, only long enough to touch the bottom, and two foot out of the water, from the float to the tip of the rod: the part above the float must never lay on the water,

Having plumbed the depth, and ground baited, put your line in very gently; if in a stream or current, your hand and rod must accompany the float and line as far as you can reach easily: then, with a gentle stroke, take your line up, and look at the bait, which, if the least damaged, must be renewed.

At the end of every swim, be sure to strike, though you do not perceive a bite. At float-fishing, the line should never be thrown in over-handed, for that splashes and frightens the fish away. Water and water-weed colours are best for lines to take this shy fish; they ought to be of eight or ten hairs at top, decreasing to a single hair, or gut, at bottom, also coloured. The Angler should never fish when his rod's shadow is seen on the water, for Roach is one of the shiest fish that swims: after taking two or three, they quit the spot, or cease biting;—then more ground bait is necessary to keep them together, and to invite others. The bread should be well chewed, that it may all sink to the bottom, for any part that drifts will spoil your sport. He loves a hard, sandy, pebbly bottom. If in a current that is rather strong, ground bait, with pollard, bran and bread (the bread separately kneaded, or it will not mix well with the other two); add one third in size of clay, and mix all together; which make into balls the size of an egg:—a small stone in the middle will make them sink better. Throw in three or four, so that

the current may bring them to the place where you have plumbed the depth.

Baits for bottom are two or three gentles on the hook at a time, small red worms, clean paste, proportioned to the hook, which ought to be small, and well hid in the bait. At the least appearance of the hook, he turns away.—The greatest nicety in baiting for him as well as Carp, is absolutely necessary to ensure success. At any motion of the float strike instantly a gentle stroke, as he only sucks in the bait; if he find the line impedes his swallow, he blows it out. If the point of the hook be not well bedded in the bait, it is in vain to fish for Roach.

DACE

Is fished for the same way as *Roach*, at bottom; the same tackle and ground bait will do; He bites also at mid-water, at a common house-fly, or any other that is small, gentles or paste; but if you whip for him on the top of the water, which is the best way when he rises at a fly, fish with three or four artificial flies, the smaller the better;—You may have two artificial flies, and the other two hooks baited with two gentles, or ants' eggs each, which method is very entertaining; for sometimes two or three are taken at a time. Be sure to strike gently the moment he takes the fly. Ants' eggs, ant flies, common house-flies; or any small flies found by the water-side, are excellent baits for the top, as well as at mid-water, for *Dace*. At all

sorts of fly-fishing, the Angler should take the advantage of high banks, bridges, or other high places, to fish from, especially when there is no wind:—this way will enable him to cast a long line out without danger of its entangling. High banks are not so necessary when the wind is favourable.

CHUB

Is a very greedy fish, and requires a large bait. A Chub of an ounce will take a bait as large as a Carp will that weighs two pounds. Fishing for small ones, it often happens that a large one is hooked; therefore the tackle, though fine, must be stronger than for any of the above. Chub-fishing requires a quick eye and a nimble hand. The Angler must keep out of sight, for he is very shy. He takes all sorts of baits at bottom, all the year. When seen in Summer at the top of the water, he is taken with an artificial, or natural fly, or both together still better. Baits for bottom are all sorts of worms, snails taken out of the shell, and slugs; oxen, sheep, or lambs' pith, with the outward skin taken off; paste made of flower and brains, and a little honey made quite stiff; or of strong cheese and flower. Beat any bush or tree by the water-side, and pick up caterpillars; if they are small, put several on your hook.

For Fly-fishing, an artificial fly, for a current, is infallible, and always to be had. An assortment is necessary to match the one in season, and is on many accounts the most

elegant mode of angling. A natural fly, added so as to cover the point of the hook, will appear as a fly paired on the surface of the water, which makes the fish more eager to bite. When a fly is not to be found in windy weather, a gentle, an ant's egg, or a caterpillar, will answer. Natural baits for fly-fishing are: The cock-chafer, with their hard wings and legs taken off, and the fine wings expanded; all sorts of beetles, in the same way; grass-hoppers, with their upper wings and their legs taken off; all sorts of flies that are found by the water-side, if they are small, two or more to cover the hook; or a caterpillar with any of the above; all sorts of bees, wasps, and hornets, ant-flies, with an ant's egg on the point of the hook.

There are three ways of Fly-Fishing, called Whipping, Casting, and Dabbling.

Whipping is done with three or four small artificial-flies, as for Dace, or with a line longer than the rod.

Casting requires a line as long as the Angler can manage, with the wind at his back: the farther he can cast, and the more he keeps out of sight, the greater will be his success.

Casting, when there is no wind, and the water quite clear, requires one small shot, placed to the line at six inches from the hook, by the aid of which, the Angler will be able to cast his long line. Instead of a fly, two or three gentles to the hook, let sink a little;

but never out of sight: if kept in constant motion, is a very killing way for Trout as well as Chub; or a gentle added to an artificial-fly is a very good bait.

Dibbing is with a line much shorter than the rod, with a looped, or elastic, artificial fly.—It is necessary to keep behind a tree, or bush, or otherwise out of sight. This way affords good sport, where the angler can find shelter; the line being short, and the fly-loop elastic, he can fish amongst weeds, and in difficult places, where dibbing only can be practiced without losing hook and line, even in bad weather.

BREAM

Is found in deep waters, on sandy bottoms: he is a very broad fish, with a large forked tail, that renders him strong in the water; his mouth is very small for his size, therefore requires a small hook and bait. The rod and line must be fine and strong. When one is found, be sure there are many, for they generally shoal together. Best baits are boiled barley, or wheat, with the husk taken off; gentles, red worms, two small ones at a time; worms that are found at the roots of water-weeds; fine clean paste, made of the finest flower with the water they live in. To keep them together, ground-baiting is necessary, which is done by chewing bread sufficiently to sink, throwing it in, that it may get to the bottom just where you have plumbed the depth to fish. In hot weather, he bites at flies

at bottom, such as frequent flags & other water-weeds; grass-hoppers without legs, and hard wings; and at the worm found at dock-roots.

After plumbing the depth, and adjusting the float, put one or more shot to the line, a foot below the float, to balance it, which is a new improvement, to take the shiest fish. The bait must be laid in, and let sink very gently to your ground bait, which can only be done this way, and with the Author's balanced float. When the fish bites, strike gently that very instant; if hooked, give him time, and keep him from weeds, if there be any. A running line, with a musket shot with a hole through it, and a small shot fast to the line to hinder the heavy one falling on the hook. This let run easy on the bottom, with the current, into holes, is an excellent way of taking all other fish that bite at bottom, as well as Bream.

CARP

Is the most shy and subtle of all fresh-water fish, called by Anglers, the Water Fox. To take him requires long, strong rods and lines; the finer the better. As he frequents weeds at some seasons, it is necessary to have lines the colour of those weeds, and best to angle near them. Plumb the depth and ground bait with the same bait, and of the same size, you intend to fish with. Some ground bait, a day or two before, which is still better if they fish with paste. The line must be put in quite gently, not to disturb the water

nor the fish, for if disturbed, he abandons the place. Where there is no great current, one may fish with two or more rods; the bait must be close to the bottom. The Angler may sit at a distance, the more out of sight the better, so that he sees the float. When the float sinks, he must creep softly and strike gently; if a fish be hooked, the Angler must lower his elbow, to elevate the tip of his rod, that should be kept bent, to prevent the fish from running to the opposite side of the water, which Carp as well as Trout, will do, if he find the rod straight; by which, fish and tackle may be lost. While the rod is bent, give him time, and manage him at will.

The Angler must be careful not to let him get amongst weeds. If a large one, a landing net is absolutely necessary. When several rods are used, they should be made fast, to prevent the fish running away with them; and a fine rod is spoiled by getting wet. With the rod in hand, one seldom hooks a large Carp.

Best baits are, fine flower and strong old cheese; with as much honey as will make it a stiff-paste when beat in a mortar; fine flower, or the crumb of bread, without cheese, or honey; fine flower, with a little saffron-water, or paste coloured with cochineal, or termeric; two, three or more gentles; the cock-chafer grub, which is found by following the plow; fruit, as cherries with the stones taken out; straw-berries, raspberries, black-berries, mulberries, or currants, and other

small fruits that are ripe; scalded green peas, three or four at a time; all sorts of worms, with particular care that the hook be entirely covered with the bait. To take Carp with red worms, the whipping of the hook to the line should be red, which improves the splendor of the worm, and invites the fish from a great distance. Hooks should always be tied the colour of the bait. Green lines are the best colour for Carp, and two hooks may be used as for Barble. The farther from shore he is angled, the better. The largest bite best at the dawn of day and late in the evening, in hot weather, with a gentle breeze; if West, or South, the better: he seldom bites when the wind is North or East.

TENCH

Is always fished for at bottom, with one or more rods and lines, which ought to be strong and fine. The colour of the line, suited to the water, seasons, and the changes of the colours of the weeds: such will ensure success. The Author's new-invented float has great advantage in still waters, for the line requires no lead; the bait, by sinking gently, attracts instead of scaring the fish, and lays light at bottom, being unconstrained by lead. Best baits are;—all sorts of worms, the redder the better, gentles, red worms dipped in tar, for large Tench, has a wonderful attracting effect in the water. From break of day, for about three hours, and in the evening until dark; after gentle showers, in hot and cloudy weather, he bites best.

PERCH

Is a bold and strong fish ; the rod and line must be strong ; fish for them near the bottom ; they bite all day in cloudy and windy weather, but in fine and clear weather, they bite best early and late. The best baits are clean worms, of all sorts, gentles, stickle barks, with their stickle or spines cut off, so as not to kill them ; put the hook through the thick part of the back, not to wound the back-bone, and fish with them alive ; it is a very killing bait ; or bait with a live Minow the same way ; for this latter sort of Perch-Fishing, your rod ought to be very long, and your line short and strong, which will enable you to convey your bait in holes, amongst weeds, piles, and all dangerous places, without losing it, or catching them this way. Fish at about mid-water, but not deeper ; give him time ; but do not let him run in the weeds any further than you cannot help ; for if you do, your line will entangle in the weeds, and it will be ten to one but you lose it, as well as the fish you have hooked.

BARBLE

Bites freely at bottom in hot weather. Little skill is required to take him ; he bites so bold, he frequently hooks himself, and runs away with rod and line, if the Angler does not mind. In cold weather, he frequents deep holes ; he loves the slime, moss, and insects, that he finds about the bottom of piles, bridges, sluices, stumps of trees, hollow, stony

places, &c. In hot weather, he gets in rapid streams, shallows that have sandy or stony bottoms, where he grubs like a pig. If you fish from shore, your rod and line must be as long as you can manage, and your hook very strong. A balance is mostly used, with two hooks, and a lead proportioned to the rapidity of the stream. The rod should have rings fastened to it, from the tip to the butt end, in a straight direction, about two feet asunder, for the line to run through, which often saves the rod from breaking, and the fish from escaping. Time to tire and a landing net is absolutely necessary for a large Barble.

Best baits are—bright large worms, kept in clean moss, adding a little red oker, which cleanses them, and enlivens their colours: they should have wet moss fresh every day in hot weather. He that has the cleanest and best baits takes most and the best fish. Large dew worms, kept in coarse wet linen rags, frequently washed without soap. (Soap or salt kills them). The largest knotted lob-worms preserved in the same manner. The black flat-tailed worm; found in damp sandy places, near rivulets and in ditches; also kept in clean wet moss, or rags, in which they cleanse themselves and improve: thus they are brighter, seen farther off, and taken more eagerly. Gentles, the cock-charfer grub; a bit of old fat bacon, or soft cheese, shaped like a small die; chickens' guts cleaned, &c. graves.

In hot weather, when Barble bites freely, he gives great encouragement to young Anglers.

N. B. If you wish for good sport, bait, and ground bait, with graves.

TROUT

Is a fish of prey: he inhabits cold, limpid, rapid streams. The best places to find him are near cataracts, the foot of waterfalls, and in the swiftest streams; also in shallow rapid rivulets. The way to take Trout is, with a running line, and largish hook, and two large worms; or with live baits, as Minnows, Gudgeons, &c. mentioned for Perch, which are best when he does not rise at a fly (for fly-fishing, see article Chub); and at night, when the largest leave their holes in search of prey. The beauty of Trout Angling is with an artificial, or a natural fly, or both together, as for Chub. The Trout is a shy, subtle fish, and must not see the Angler, his shadow, nor his tackle, if possible. A fine rod, and a line as long as the Angler can manage, is necessary, and will give him many advantages at fly fishing. His fly must be kept in constant motion, always against the current, and the less of the line in the water, the better.

After having tried the sides, the Angler may approach, and cast out as far as he can:—large Trout frequently retire into deep, still places. If he be large, he will not refuse two large, well-scoured worms, nor a

live bait. Worms cannot be too large, nor too clean. He also bites at the hard Roe of his own species, as much of it as completely covers the hook; or Salmon Spawn scalded, or salted, and kept for use.

N. B. By live bait is understood small fish.

PIKE

Is a fish of prey, is fished for in three different ways. The first, called trolling, is the noblest branch of Angling, and is performed as follows: the Angler must have a very long and strong rod, with rings, as for Barble, and a winch, or reel, properly fastened to the butt-end; a trolling line at least thirty or forty yards long, with a swivel at the end, which receives the loop of the wire that the hook is fastened to;—whether a double or single hook, it must be leaded.

Baits and Method of Baiting.

Take a fine fresh Gudgeon, or any other small fish, except Perch; a fish-needle must be ran into his mouth and out of the middle of his tail; place the loop of the wire that has the hook to it on the crook, or eye of the needle, and draw it through the fish, so that the whole of the lead comes in his mouth, which sometimes must be made wider with a knife, or scissors, that the lead may be hid therein: the points of the hook being naked is of no consequence: the mouth and gills must be sewed up, and the lead so fastened, with a common needle and thread, as not to move; in like manner, fasten his tail to the

wire, on which, be sure the bait lays straight:—then put the loop of the wire on the loop of the swivel, and draw the bait through. Thus equipped, begin to troll; let the bait fall in bold at first, close to the shore, if deep. With your right hand, hold the rod tight, keeping the top always in motion, by highering and lowering; in your left, hold your line, which keep continually pulling and letting go; this gives the bait a motion, as if alive in the water. One gill fin cut off improves the motion of the bait. If a Pike be near, he darts at the bait, and seizes it with incredible voracity, and runs off to his hole.

Be attentive to have your line clear, to let him run as he generally does; wide waters require line in proportion; be sure not to strike, for if you do, it only pulls the bait out of his mouth, without hooking him; for he takes ten minutes, or more, before he pouches his prey. The Angler will easily perceive when the bait is quite gorged, for then the Pike feels the hook, and begins to plunge, and make every effort to escape; at which time, and not before, the Angler must strike gently. If the line slacken, it must be wound up, so as to keep it always tight. When he struggles and pulls hard, more line must be veered out, keeping it still tight, so he does not get among weeds, or entangle the line. In this way he is played, till quite exhausted. He is not to be weighed out of the water, for he has but one gut, called a

pouch, which his own weight brings out of his mouth, while perhaps the current carries away the fish: here is seen the necessity of a landing-net, with which it requires some skill to land him. Though he appears exhausted, the Angler must not trust him, for sometimes at the sight of the net, he darts away again; therefore the line must be kept clear, to veer out when required. His head must be taken foremost in the landing-net, or he will spring out.

But if, after trying close in shore two or three times, the Angler has not a run, as it is called; for Pike does not bite like other fish, but runs off with the bait to his hole, as above; then he may be sure no Pike is there; then he must veer out as far as he can from shore, keeping the bait constantly in motion, coiling in his line, and veering again two or three times; if still he get no run, the Angler goes farther on, until he get a run.

In trolling, one is always in motion; near weeds, bull-rushes, and deep holes, are likely places to find Pike.

As the point of the hook, or hooks, is naked; caution is required not to hook weeds, &c. The bait should never touch the bottom, much less drag on the ground.

The bait is not the worse for having been chewed by a Pike, so it is not torn too much. An expert Angler baits several hooks before he goes to the water-side, and keeps them fresh in a damp cloth. Dark, cloudy, windy

weather, is better for trolling than a fine clear day; morning and evening in hot weather, in cold, the middle of the day. It is difficult and dangerous to take the hook out of his pouch when he is taken, on account of his sharp teeth. The best hold of him is at his eyes, and a gorging needle is quite necessary. Care must be taken of his bite; for it remains very sore for some days. When the angler hooks one, it affords him more sport than can be expressed.

Second way of taking Pike is called Snap-Fishing, which requires still stronger tackle than the first. A very strong rod, or pole, with rings, and a very strong line, shorter than the rod, all stronger than for trolling. A Snap Hook is composed of three hooks, two large, back to back, and one small hook fastened between the shanks of the large ones, which little one is baited with a dead fish, hooking it so as to let the head fall between the two large ones; to be made fast there with a bit of thread, and let sink amongst weeds without touching them, or in deep holes, and other likely places. As soon as he seizes the bait, the Angler strikes and pulls him out by main force, giving him no time to gorge. A landing net is not wanted; but the gorging needle must not be forgot. When Trolling, a Pike sometimes makes at the bait and refuses it, which often happens in clear water; in which case, Snapping is the surest way to take him. N. B. At Snap, a large cork-float is sometimes necessary.

SALMON, & LARGE SALMON TROUT,

Are fished for at bottom, with a trolling rod, line and winch, a Salmon-hook, and two or three large lob-worms at a time, a live bait, or a green frog. The hook must be tied to wire, gimp, or twisted gut. He is a fish of prey, with a single row of teeth, in either jaw, that does not cut the line as Pike does: he is found in deep holes, at the roots of trees, about piles, and in remote places, where the water is deep. The bait and line must be let sink very gently, keeping as far out of sight as possible. When one is hooked, veer out line enough, and keep him as far from shore as you can, with his head against the stream. If he leap out, then lower your elbow, keep your rod and line tort, which is the best way to drown him. Always walk some distance from where you hook him, still keeping out of sight, and preventing him getting to holes, piles, roots of trees, &c. or he will entangle your line. When you fish for him with an artificial fly, your rod must be very long, strong, and supple, with a strong line on a winch; the farther you cast out the better; with a large, gaudy, artificial fly, its body brilliant with gold or silver, and in size not less than a common butterfly. A real butterfly on the point of the hook improves the bait.—A landing net, or hook, is necessary, and he must never be brought near the shore, till he lays floating on the water, as if dead: then put your landing net gently under

him, or your hook in his gills, and so land him at a convenient place.

N. B. Water Mice and Rats are the favourite prey of Pike as well as of Salmon.

THE EEL

Bites only at bottom, early and late in warm weather, and best if dark and cloudy, and after thunder-storms; at all sorts of worms, &c. In the night, the large ones take a Gudgeon, Roach, &c. on an armed hook, baited as for Pike, but not leaded hooks: all day long, in clear water, he is taken out of his hole by sniggling, as it is called; which is for the Eel only. Instead of a hook to a strong silk line, you have a very strong, well-tempered, sniggling needle, and another needle put into the tip of your rod, up to the head and eye; bait the first with a large lob-worm, and put the point into the eye of the other, on the tip of your rod; pull your line a little, and hold it straight in the same hand with the butt-end of the rod, so as to prevent the point of the one falling out of the eye of the other; stoop down, and look for a hole in the bank-side, about piles, great stones, bridges, sluices, flood-gates, &c. when you find a hole, guide your bait with the tip of your rod, gently into it; then slacken your line, that the point and bait may quit the eye of the other needle, and fall directly into the hole; and draw the rod out quite gently. It is easy to know if it be an Eel-hole, you may see the water move, if the Eel be in it, or slimy strings to it. If a water-

rat hole, it is large and round, and has no slime about it: sometimes a large Eel will kill a rat, and take possession; therefore it is best to try all the holes you find. If an Eel be there, you soon feel his bite; give him time before you strike. If a large one, you are sure to take him. Sometimes he rolls himself up in a knot with the line; it is impossible then to pull him out; time must be allowed him to tire. When you get him out, put one foot on him, and with a handfull of sand, hold him, and feel for your needle; push it through him, and draw the line after:—the needle is always found athwart in him, since the line is fastened to the middle; if the sniggling needle does not bend, nor break, it is impossible to lose him. Some use a hook, which is not so proper.



General Remarks.

First. It cannot be too often recommended to fish fine and strong, which requires a rod as true as a gun-barrel, transparent lines, of water-colour, and a small hook, which does not surprize nor scare away the fish; ten times more fish may be taken thus than in the common way.

Second. To plumb the depth. After the line is put to your rod, before you begin to angle, take your sheet-lead plumb, unroll it a little, fasten your hook to it, by rolling part of the lead on it; then plumb the depth of the water, just where you intend to fish;

draw your line out, and adjust your float, so as it may sink an inch or two under water when the fish bites; then take off your plumb, bait your hook and begin; always ascertaining the depth at float-fishing, and ground-baiting on the very spot.

Third. A Clearing-Ring is positively necessary, at bottom-fishing; for it frequently happens, that the hook lays hold of something, so as not to be cleared without straining the tackle and losing the hook; but by the aid of a Clearing-Ring, it is generally saved.

Fourth. A drag is also necessary, to clear a place amongst weeds. Some places are so over-run with weeds, that they forbid angling, though full of fine fish. With the drag, it is easy to clear the weeds away at the best and most convenient places, which is better, if done a day or two before you fish: then use a strong rod, a short and strong line, and a larger float to carry more lead than common.

Fifth. The Angler who goes out with only one sort of tackle may easily be disappointed of sport: change of wind, weather, or water, which but too often happens, makes a complete assortment necessary.

Sixth. The Author has been particular in mentioning some of the smallest fish, not only for the diversion of young Anglers and Ladies; but as they must be had for bait: he that intends to take fish of prey, should always have a fine line and hook, and small worms; first to take such live bait as described, if he has no readier method.

The Angler's Commandments.



First. Thou shalt not fish when the wind is cold, nor shalt thou fish within the length of thy rod and line of thy Brother Angler.

Second. Thou shalt not shew thyself to the fish, nor let thy shadow be seen on the water.

Third. Thou shalt not Float-Fish without plumbing the depth.

Fourth. Thou shalt not Fly-Fish, with the wind in thy face ; nor shalt thou let thy line, or any part thereof, fall on the water ; but the fly only, if possible.

Fifth. Thou shalt not fish in troubled water.

Sixth. Thou shalt not take small fish with large hooks.

Seventh. Thou shalt not have good sport, unless thou strikest the moment the fish bites, nor shalt thou strike too hard.

Eighth. Thou shalt not land a large fish, without a landing-net, or landing-hook ; nor shalt thou be in too great a hurry in so doing.

Ninth. Thou shalt not make paste with dirty hands.

Tenth. Thou shalt not have good sport, without good baits, rods, lines, and hooks.

THE
COMPLEAT TROLLER;

OR, THE ART OF

TROLLING:

WITH

Descriptions of all the Utensils, Instruments, Tackle,
and Materials requisite for a Gentleman Troller;
and Directions how to use them.

AS ALSO A BRIEF ACCOUNT

OF MOST OF THE

Principal Rivers in England.

By ROBERT NOBBS, Esq.

A. M.

—*Trahit sua quemq; voluptas.*

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J. B. ROBERTS, 10, Pall Mall, London.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

JAMES TRYON, ESQ.

OF

Bullwick in Northamptonshire,

A Favourer of this Art,

The Author wisheth all Health and Honour here,
and Happiness hereafter.

SIR,

It is both my duty and my debt, to return the improvement of my talent to you, from whom I first received it, and to pay my thanks for those borrowed sparks which have since kindled and increased into a flame. That debtor is too ungrateful, and deserves to have no favour shewed him in the principal, that never comes to pay, much less acknowledge, an interest. This obligation, Sir, was one motive to address this piece to you, having at first been initiated in this little art I pretend to, by your brother and yourself; but fearing withal the severe and critical censure of a more judicious eye. Be pleased therefore to accept of this small tribute, not for any worth or desert of its own, but as a token of my gratitude. Your name, I confess,

is too great to stand in the front of so inconsiderable a paper as this, wherewith I here present you, and might make a suitable frontispiece for some more excellent work. Whatever it be, begs your candid acceptance; it may perhaps need, but I fear it deserves not so good a Patron. Another reason, Sir, why I offer this tract to you, is an ambition I have to bring the world better acquainted with so great a part of its own treasure, and to make known, that there are yet some such worthy persons as yourself, whom even they that are enemies to this present world cannot refuse both to love and honour. I shall forbear at this time to display your merits, in reference to my own particular; lest he that reads this and sees Your Name prefixed, may expect more by the Epistle than is performed in the book, and so I make myself guilty of his pride and indiscretion that sets a fair porch before a sorry building. This only, Sir, I shall endeavour, and do beg you to believe, that I shall always be industrious to manifest myself,

Right Worshipful,

Your's, in all Christian Services,

R. NOBBS.

TO THE READER.

IT is not any desire either of profit or credit that induced me to write this Piece, only the solicitations of some private Friends, concurring with my own nature and inclination, which was always addicted to this sport: I never could see any thing of this subject in particular: *The Complete Angler* hints the most at it, as first of the nature and generation, and age of a Pike, quoting the same Author Gesner that I do. He also observes some physical effects of him, the spawning time; all sorts of baits, especially of the frog, he speaks much, and the ledger bait; he hath inserted a story of the antipathy between a land frog, which he conceives venemous, and a pike, in a pond in Bohemia; he shews the way to bait the hook, as also to play it with bladders, bullrushes, &c. teaches a way to charm and invite the fish, by sweetening the bait with gum of ivy dissolved in oil of spike; as likewise a receipt to roast a pike. This is the sum of Mr. Walton's discourse. Then there is the Gentleman's Recreation, hath one chapter, but much the same as the other, as borrowed from him. I never could see any

other concerning trolling ; if there be, it must be very old standing, and any thing new is more pleasing, because *hominum est novitatis avida*. I have not put it in that florid dress of eloquence or rhetorical phrases, nor indeed would the subject bear it.

Ornarires ipsa negat, content a doceri.

The thing itself is only well content

To be for use, and not for ornament.

I confess I have not had that experience in the art which many have that have made it their business for the space of several years, and I but a late pretender ; however this may invite some that are more judicious and able to undertake the work ; in the mean time use this till a better comes, and think of that of the poet,

—*Si quid novisti rectius istis*

Candidus imperti, si non his utere mecum.

If any thing thou know'st that better is,

Impart it, else content thyself with this.

It cannot be expected that this work could be large, these being only the private sentiments and collections of my own experience. The first édition is always the least ; if it were worthy of a second impression, it might receive some additions, as having the advantage

of being enlarged, by the help of some new and more refined notions; nor is the subject copious enough to make a fuller treatise, it being confined to one particular manner of fishing, which if it had extended to the generality of the art, and to all the fresh-water inhabitants, it might have made this diminutive piece swell into a folio.

The design of it is only to give those some insight and instructions who are wholly ignorant, but desire to learn: not that it can benefit those that are already taught, and perhaps may find, or at least pretend to find, many errors in it; for this I can attest, that what is said is as true as *probatum est*; not having confided to any man's judgment, but to my own experience. Whether then it be approved of or not, it must take its fortune, as all other books do, which are blamed by some and commended by others:

—*Habent sua fata libelli*—

—The Poet sings,
Books have their chance as well as other things.

As plain as it is, it may be serviceable to some, and if it had been better and more accurately done, it might have been condemned by others. Every man that is a Fisherman hath some private thoughts of his own, which he will still prefer before others. Besides, the diversion of fishing is now generally undervalued, it being an art which few take plea-

sure in; nothing passing for noble and delightful, which is not brave and costly; as though men could not gratify their senses without the consumption of their estates.

Hawking and Hunting have had their excellencies celebrated with large encomiums, and though I design not to slight or disparage those noble recreations, which have been so much famed in all ages and by all degrees; yet this I must affirm, that they fall not within the compass of every man to pursue, being as it were only entailed on vast estates; for if lower fortunes should seek to enjoy them, Actæon's Fable might prove a true story, and these ravenous birds make a prey upon their masters. Besides, those recreations are more obnoxious to choler and passion than these of ours. Our simple art composes the soul to that quiet and serenity, which gives a man the fullest possession and fruition of himself, and all his enjoyments.

This clearness and equanimity of spirit being a matter of so high concern, is of much value and esteem in the opinion of many profound Philosophers. Witness that excellent Tract of Petrarche, *De Tranquillitate Animo*, and certainly he that lives, *Sibi et Deo*, leads the most happy life. Though all these contentments, and many more, both for health and pleasure, as well to gratify the senses and delight the mind, do arise from this cheap, and as some call it, mean, melancholy art; I say, though all these satisfactions do

proceed from it, and it propounds pleasure at such an easy rate; yet I expect to meet with no other entertainment in the publishing of it than neglect, if not scorn and contempt. Some few there are that have cast off their other recreations and embraced this; and I never knew any repent of their learning this, and withdrawing their affections from their beloved recreation. If this art therefore should prove a noble rest to thy mind, it will be a great satisfaction to his who is thy well-wishing friend and servant,

R. N.

TO HIS INGENIOUS FRIEND

MR. ROBERT NOBBS,

ON HIS BOOK CALLED

The Complete Troller.

GO on (dear brother) to display thine art,
 Of thy experience lend the world a part:
 Let thy light shine, that men may see thereby,
 There's nothing private kept can edify.
 Hide not thy talent: dread that cursed fate
 Of him that hid it; and communicate.
 Blush not, nor fear thy secrets to unfold;
 For what thou sayst has been approved of old,
 And practis'd too; the difference only this,
 Their sport in salt, thine in fresh water is;
 The good disciples first catch'd fish, and then
 They left their nets, and afterwards catch'd men;
 From which we may this observation make,
 'Tis lawful fish as well as men to take.
 Thy sacred function is divine, and all
 Thy recreations apostolical.
 Catch what thou long hast fished for, then go pray,
 Catch one great fish, and throw thy net away.

Your truly Humble Servant,

G. D. of Trin. Col.

TO HIS ESTEEMED FRIEND

MR. ROBERT NOBBS,

ON

HIS BOOK OF TROLLING.

LET proud Aëtaon chase the tim'rous hart,
 And fair Diana pierce him with her dart;
 Let Pan the Satyrs and the Nymphs control,
 And briny Nereus on the billows roll;

Whilst thou the brooks and silver streams dost greet,
 Of Avon, Cham, Welland, and Nine, that meet.
 Thou dost not treat of that deformed race,
 Which Neptune governs with his triple mace;
 Not of that Monster in the ocean deep,
 Which did in's belly three days Jonas keep;
 Nor of the Orke that on Cephæan strand,
 Bold Perseus slew with strong and mighty hand;
 Nor of th' admirer of sweet harp, that bore
 Arion safely on his back to the shore;
 Nor of that fish that bears a sword in's snout,
 Nor the fierce Thrasher, that does fling about.
 Nor the Crocodile, that weeps when he does wrong,
 The Turbat, Sturgeon, or the Conger long:
 These are the flock of Proteus' wat'ry fold,
 And are too strong for slender lines to hold.
 Thy recreation hath more easy been,
 In rivers fresh adorn'd with meadows green;
 Checker'd with flowers, cloath'd in Ver's livery,
 Enamell'd round with Flora's tapestry.
 These are thy country pastimes and delights,
 Proud of good luck, when greedy Lupus bites;
 And cross the stream thy slender line does draw,
 Gorging thy glistening bait in's hungry maw;
 Then strike him gently, tire him, and lie down,
 Take him by the eyes, and give him leave to drown!

In these diversions thou dost imitate
 Those twelve Christ chose his word to propagate;
 This recreation they did countenance,
 And by their practice did it much advance;
 Thou their example hast before thine eyes,
 How they did use this harmless exercise;
 In this thou truly dost apostolize.

R. L. M. A.

ON THE

Antiquity and Invention

OF

FISHING;

AND ITS PRAISE IN GENERAL.

WHEN God at first plac'd Adam in a seat,
 So rare, so rich, so princely, and so great,
 Eden's fair garden, Eastward to the Sun,
 Through whose fat soil four silver streams did run;
 The first Euphrates, whose fair waves do kiss
 The monarch's towers of proud Semiramis:
 Swift Pison thence, and Gihon did arise, (Gen. 2
 Tigris the fourth, to water Paradise;
 These in their kind were furnish'd to present
 Adam with fish from the watery element:
 This added to his bliss, by which we see
 Fishing derives an ancient pedigree,
 And bears its date from the forbidden tree,
 Next unto him that built the wooden wall,
 But for whose ark the flood had drowned all.
 Yet still the fish mov'd in their proper sphere,
 They neither rain nor deluge deep did fear.
 Noah with them himself might recreate, (Gen. 8
 Till Dove brought news the waters did abate.
 Food sure was scarce, when Mr. Flood had left,
 Few beasts but those for procreation kept.
 Hunger might force eight persons to devise
 A trick to take what fish to the top did rise.
 Now this to poets' fiction did afford
 How the empty world should be with people stor'd.
 When good Deucalion and his Pyrrha dear,
 Were left of all that overwhelmed were;

They to an antient temple went, that stood
 Forlorn and wasted by the raging flood;
 Prostrate they fell upon the sacred ground,
 Devoutly praying the earth might re-abound.
 The Goddess heard their prayers, and bid them take
 Their mother's bones, and throw behind their back.
 This oracle obscure and dark of sense,
 Amaz'd their minds, what they might draw from thence.
 They then view'd hill and dale, each rock and tree,
 And thought the earth their mother well might be.
 Therefore to try if it were false or true,
 The scatter'd stones behind their backs they threw;
 Forthwith the stones, as they had life, conceiv'd,
 Began to move, and more and more receiv'd
 The shape of man. Thus was the world again
 Supply'd with people sprung with little pain;
 But yet no birds or beasts for meat were found,
 Since the great deluge all destroy'd and drown'd.
 Then did Deucalion first the art invent
 Of fishing, and to woods and groves he went:
 There from the trees, long rinds and crooks he brake,
 And made them hooks and lines the fish to take.
 In this rude sort began this simple art,
 The fish as yet had felt but little smart,
 And were to bite more eager, apt, and bold,
 In that first age, which was then all of gold:
 But when in time the fear and dread of man
 Fell more and more on the creatures, they began
 To stand in awe of this usurping king,
 That did both seas and earth in thraldom bring.
 'Twas then a work of greater skill to take
 The wary fish in any pond or lake.
 So worse and worse, two ages more did pass,
 And hooks were made of silver and of brass;
 And lines of hemp and flax were framed new,
 So still this art more perfect daily grew.
 But at the last, the iron age grew near,
 And hooks of hardest steel invented were;

And rods of lightest cane and hazel plant,
And lines of silk and hair no skill did want.

Thus far the fable,—next the truth presents
How fish of wonders have been instruments.
A monstrous fish God did prepare, to save (Jon. 1.
The angry prophet in the Euxine wave,
Which doth for us an observation make,
That to a fish the great Jehovah spake.
Of great and strange effects b'inform'd you may,
If you'll give credit to Apocrypha;
Where the fish's gall they dry and pulverize
To cure the whiteness of old Tobit's eyes; Tob. 6.
And of the heart's perfume is made a spell
To charm the Devil sweetly into hell.
Whether or not, this truth authentic be,
We will not here dispute authority:
Only believe it with a moral faith,
And now let's hear what Evangelium saith.

When the collectors of the tribute went
To Christ for pay to the seas, he Simon sent,
Who opening the fishes mouth, that he first took,
A piece of money with a silver hook. (Mat. 17.
When at Emaus, Christ alone appear'd (Luke 24.
To the two disciples that a spirit fear'd;—
He asked them for meat, and the first dish
That he did eat of was a broiled fish.
When Christ another time appearance made,
He found 's Disciples at the fishing trade;
Andrew, and James, and John, were toiling sore;
Mending their nets when Jesus stood on the shore.
When Simon Peter saw it was the Lord, (John 21.
O'erjoyed he was, and leaped overboard,
Naked, girt only with his fishers' coat,
He cast himself down headlong from the boat.
This Peter durst not on the waters pass,
Without his master, yet chief fisher was;
Chief Shepherd, and first Pope, whose name (say some)
Descended to the old fisherman at Rome.

What if St. Peter ne'er to Rome was sent,
 The Scripture says he oft a fishing went.
 What if he ne'er sate bishop in Rome's see,
 At sea he was with the sons of Zebedee, (Mar. 1.)
 Who long had toil'd, and had nothing caught,
 Till Jesus bid them let down for a draught;
 In which a multitude though they did take,
 It's written there, their nets they did not break;
 But straight retired themselves from thence, and fed
 Upon their broiled fishes and their bread. (Mat. 4.)

It's said they took an hundred fifty-three,
 Some of all kinds, i' the Sea of Galilee;
 By which all sorts of men is signified,
 And the great fishing of the world implied;
 How the Apostles by their preaching shall,
 Both poor and rich, both base and noble call;
 And draw them with their nets from the world's sea,
 To th' ship of comfort and felicity.
 So Amos, Isai, Habakkuk compare, (Isai. 19.)
 Things that of worth and great importance are,
 To fishing, drags, and nets, and like to these,
 Are the Wiseman's fish-pools in the Canticles: (Can. 7.)
 So do Ezekiel and Jeremy (Jer. 16. (10.)
 Call preachers fishers in their prophesy, (Eze. 47.)
 Whose doctrine is their nets, which from these toys
 Do draw men's souls into eternal joys:
 When Christ his power and Godhead did express
 To th' hungry people in the wilderness; (Mat. 14.)
 He first made choice of loaves, life's staff, and then,
 Two little fishes fed five thousand men.
 Another time a multitude he fed (Mat. 15.)
 With few small fishes and a little bread.
 If we search Chronicles, we there may see
 The art of fishing from antiquity:
 When Bishop Wilfrid turn'd to Christian faith
 The heathen Saxons (an historian saith);
 He teaches them this art at first, and makes
 Those nets catch fish, which did before catch snakes.

He, going with these Pagans, to the brook,
 Three hundred fishes with their nets he took,
 Straight he divides the spoil, and one part gets
 Himself; then furnished them that owned the nets!
 The third part to the poor he did divide,
 Which made 's Religion to be deified,
 And gained him converts, when he did bestow
 His prayers above, with blessings here below.
 In fine, if you look up to the azure sky,
 And view the circles in Astronomy,
 You there may see a fish preferred so high,
 The heavens are with the constellation graced;
 Pisces is next unto Aquarius placed;
 For lest the firmament a sign should lack,
 A fish the twelfth is in the zodiac.
 Thus from the ocean to the stars, we can
 Advance the praises of the fisherman.
 And 'tis from Gospel and the Prophets seen,
 What honour, use of fish, and fishing 's been.

R. NOBBS, M. A.

THE

FISHERMAN'S WISH.

WOULD I might live near Avon's flow'ry brink,
And on the world and my Creator think;
Whilst others strive, ill gotten goods t' embrace,
Would I near Welland had a dwelling-place.

Would I these harmless pastimes might pursue,
And uncontroll'd might ponds and rivers view;
Whilst others spend their time in base excess,
In drinking, gaming, and in wantonness.

Would I might let my fancy feed its fill,
And daily by fresh rivers walk at will,
Whilst others toil in hunting, are perplex'd,
And with unquiet recreations vex'd.

Would I might view the compass of the sky,
The flaming chariot of the world's great eye,
And fair Aurora lifting up her head,
Blushing to rise from old Tithonus' bed.

Would I might walk in woods and forests long,
In whose cool bowers the birds sing many a song;
And in the verdant meadows, fresh and green,
Would I might sit and court the Summer's queen.

Sic Optat, R. N.

THE
COMPLETE TROLLER;

OR, THE ART OF

TROLLING.

CHAP. I.

Of the Name and Nature of a Pike.

A Pike is called in the Latin *Lucius*, or *Lucendo*, from his shining in the water, or else (which is more probable) from the Greek word *Lupus*; as the Wolf is the most ravenous and cruel among beasts, so the Pike is the most greedy and devouring fish among fishes: so that *Lupis Piscis* is the proper name for the Sea-Wolf, yet it is often used for the Pike itself, the fresh-water Wolf; is of so greedy and voracious a nature, that he doth not only prey upon small fishes, frogs, &c. that come in his way, but sometimes upon Water-Fowls, &c. and (some say) he will fasten upon greater animals. A German writer reports for a certain truth, that having his mule to drink at the river Rhine, she was caught so fast by her nether lip with a Pike, that being sorely bit and terrified at so unex-

pected an assault, she suddenly threw up her head, and cast the fish on shore, which became a prey to the master of the mule. Out of this Pike were taken, when it was opened, two young geese or goslings, a fen-duck, and the foot of a maid.

If this story is not creditable, because it is so far-fetched as from Germany, yet this is certain, that a more-hen hath been found in the belly of a Pike taken out of our rivers; and I have seen myself that a pike hath risen and struck at a swallow, that hath dipt her wings upon the waters; and have known them that have used a live sparrow for a bait at snap. An English physician made this observation in his travels in the Low Countries, that as they were passing the rivers in little boats, the pikes struck so swiftly and greedily at the small fry, that sometimes they shot themselves so far out of the water, that they fell into the boat. This is another foreign story, which we may parallel with one at home; how one that had caught an eel, and was pulling off the skin and washing it in a mote, a pike leaped at the eel and fastened himself so to it, that he drew out both eel and pike. Of all the small officers under this great captain, a perch is the most secure from his devouring jaws; on which he seldom adventures, except mere hunger compels him: yet Albert says, he will take a perch by the head, and kill it with his teeth first, lest if he should gorge it alive, the fins

and prickles might be offensive to his maw: nor does he only tyrannize over the small inhabitants of his own dominions, and sometimes trespasses upon another element, but often transgresses the laws of generation, and those of his own species he unnaturally devours. This common-wealth among the fishes, is much like Mr. Nobbs's state of nature; which is but *Status Belli*, the great ones always devour the less; such is the government, or rather anarchy of the waters, where might will overcome right, and the weakest go to the wall.

A Pike is a prince in his own liquid country, and like a universal monarch, can command all the regiments of the scaled army, can lord it over all his vassals, and like a potent tyrant, can enslave all the residents in his own territories without the least resistance: yet one professed enemy he hath, and that more powerful than himself, which is a creature of an amphibious nature, and can live by land as well as by water—this is a cunning and a choice fisher; he seldom takes any but the best and biggest fish: he is much esteemed in some countries, especially in Sweden, where he is kept tame for the purpose, and taught so much craft and dexterity, that the cook will send him out of the kitchen when he wants a dish of fish, and he will go straight to the pond and fetch them. It is a strange tale if true, and we had better believe it, than go so far to disprove it: I never looked upon

an Otter to be such a docile and serviceable creature; though perhaps those of another country may differ much in their nature from ours.

CHAP. II.

Of the Parts and Lineaments of a Pike.

AS to the shape and proportion of this great devourer, the figure of his body is very long, his back broad, and almost square; equal to the lowest fins: his head is lean and very bony, which bones in his head, some have resembled to things of mysterious consequence; one of which they commonly compare to the cross, another to the spear, three others to those bloody nails which were instruments of our Saviour's passion. If those comparisons smell any thing of superstition, as to physical use, those bones may be profitable; for the jaw-bone beaten to powder may be helpful for pleurisies and the sharpness of urine; some do approve of it as a remedy for the pain in the heart and stomach; others affirm that the small bones pulverized may be fitly used to dry up sores, and many the like medicinal qualities are attributed to the Pike's head.

An ancient author writing the nature of things, does discover a stone in the brain of a Pike much like a chrysal: Gesner himself, the great naturalist, testifies that he found in the

head of a little Pike two white stones. As to the shape of his head, his snout is long, which some have compared to the beak of a Goose. His lower jaw is far longer than his upper; and in it are placed many teeth orderly disposed in ranks; his eyes are of a golden colour, and very quick-sighted, as are all sorts of fish; his belly is always white, but his back and sides are of a black and speckled yellow; his ventricle is very large and capacious, and his throat short, as we may see by his prey which he hath newly taken and not digested; part of it will come up into his mouth; but this is when he seizes upon a great prize.

An author affirms, that he saw a Pike of that wonderful bigness, that had another within him considerably great, and that within had a Water-Rat in its belly; so that the ventricle of the great one must be exceeding large and extensive. Gesner likewise observes, that his heart and gall are very medicinal to cure agues, abate fevers, &c. and that his biting is venomous and hard to be cured.

CHAP. III.

Of the Age and Growth of a Pike.

AS to the increase and vivacity of this devouring fish, some historians have asserted that he will live to an incredible age; and that he will carry half as many years as

scales upon his back. Our fore-quoted author, Gesner, relates in his Natural History that a Pike was taken out of a pond of the Emperor Frederick, that had lived upwards of 260 years, which appeared by the date in a brass ring, which lay hidden and grown over in his gills: it had this inscription written in Latin, *Ego sum illi piscis huic Stagno omnium primus impositus per Mundi Rectoris Frederici secundi manus die quinta Octobris, 1497*; but whether our faith will give us leave to believe this or not, it is not material; for though we cannot prove him to be so longevous as to reach hundreds, it is certain he will live some scores of years; and one of 40 or 45 inches, which is of the largest size, may possibly consist of as many years as inches; and some of our own countrymen have known and observed a Pike to come within ten years of the distinct age of man, and have lived longer, had not fate hastened his death by a violent hand. One of 40 inches (I said) might be of as many years old; not that a Pike grows just about an inch in a year, that is hard to determine, some grow faster, some slower, according to the diversity of the water and their food: river-fish are thought to grow much faster than pond-fish; except the pond is very large and has a good stream run through it; there is nothing helps so much to the feeding of a Pike as fresh water. That is the reason why a Pike will not bite well after a great rain. Jacks or Pickerills grow faster than great

ones, and I have observed in a clear and springing brook, that a Jack spawned in March will take a bait in October following, and will increase to 18 inches the next March. In standing water, as motes and ponds, he grows not so fast; to try the experiment, I have taken one out with a cast-net in May, measured him and marked him on his tail, and about Michaelmas I have taken the same fish, as appeared by the mark, and then measured him again, and he had not increased in length above 2 inches, and very little in breadth: a river fish will grow very fast till he come to be 24 or near 30 inches, then he stands a little, and spreads himself in thickness; after that he will grow a long time, and is much longer growing to his full bigness from 30 inches than he was increasing to that proportion.

He is a great breeder and multiplier, as we may see in those places that preserved them, how soon a river is full stocked. Small Jacks shew themselves much after a spring-flood, every ditch is then full of Pickerills, and the fens are so abundantly stored with them, that you may buy a horse-load for a shilling. It is the spring-tide that brings them up, for about Midsummer and after, they much decrease and diminish in their number; some being taken with snares and bow-nets, some with trolling, and many little ones devoured by the greater: so that in the stocking of a pond, the wisest course is to put in all your Jacks as near as you can of a bigness, for a Pike of 30 inches

will make no bones of one of 16. As to the increase of them, some are apt to grow more in length, others more in breadth and thickness; which latter sort are the best fed and the firmest fishes; for a lean, slender Pike, though he may seem to advance and improve in length, yet he is commonly a waster; if he hath received any outward hurt, or wound, either by an Otter, or by a stronger of his own species, or is inwardly pricked by the hook, or any casualty; yet still he will live and eat his meat, and be as hungry as Pharaoh's lean kine, which devoured the fat ones: he will be yet for plunder and as greedy as ever, though he do not thrive; this I observed in a large Pike which I took in a wasting condition; he had a long hook in his belly, and the end of the wire hung out of his mouth; he might probably have been long in that declining state, and so might have continued a considerable time, though he fall away, and must at last die of a consumption.

There are several circumstances of time and place which may be very advantageous, and conduce much to the growth of a Pike; a still, shady, unfrequented place, where he is not frightened, or disturbed, is very commodious for his rest and repast; especially if his shelter be thick and convenient: if a ditch join upon the river, a spring or small brook run into it, his abode will be more pleasing: if it be a solitary and retired corner, not beaten by fishers, or the often visits of his flattering friends.

CHAP. IV.

The Harbour of a Pike.

THE harbour of a Pike is usually amongst or near a bank of weeds; for he does not always confine himself to his bed, and lye close like a fox in his den, but often shoots out, and sports in the clear stream; (like the great Leviathan) takes his pastime in the middle of the waters. The weeds indeed are his chief refuge. If he be frightened by a net, or the sudden disturbance of his approaching enemy; he then strikes to his harbour, and there keeps his garrison. Those weeds which he most delights in, are flags and bulrushes, candocks, reeds, green fog, and a weed with a small leaf, which he often frequents, especially about October, when they begin to rot. If a place is very thick and weedy, you cannot so easily guess where his lodgings are, but if the river is free from weeds, only here and there a bank or bed of bulrushes, you may safely conclude those are his retirements and his baiting-places: if the river is broad, deep, and straight, like a scour, it will be the more difficult to find his recess; and if there are but few fish, it will be next to seeking a needle in a bottle of hay; for in such false rivers, you may troll perhaps from morning till night and scarcely get a run. But if such a place is little beaten, and have plenty of fish, you may have sport enough: then you must aim your-

self with a deal of patience, and fish it very true and slow. There is not so much variety and delight in trolling such a river, because it is all along even and alike, and you cannot conceive where your prey lies; this you may call hap-hazard, and expect a run every throw, though you go three or four hours, and neither see nor feel any fish but your own bait.

The best and securest way of fishing these wide reaches is by drawing the bait along the sides next to you, except you can search the breadth of it, and throw over to the farther side; but that is but dull and slow sport, it will take a deal of time to troll the length of a furlong. If your river consists of pits, which is the quickest and most delightful way of trolling, you must have a special regard to the top and bottom of the pit. A Pike may be taken sometimes in the middle, but his chief seat and habitation is at the bottom of the pit; and this I have often observed, that where one Pike hath been taken at the mouth, another hath been found at the foot, or bottom of the pit.

These are the ordinary places; yet, according to the variety of weather and seasons of the year, a Pike will alter and change his dwelling. In the Winter, he usually couches very nigh the ground, and gets into the deepest and obscurest places; about the latter end of February, or the beginning of March, he begins to be weary of his melancholy repose, and to raise himself a little from the bottom,

and is more active in seeking his food : at the latter end of March, or sometimes the middle, he shoots in the scoures, and there leaves the spawn to multiply according to its kind ; in April and May, he still gets higher, and advances himself into the shallows ; and if unmolested there, he will so continue most part of Summer ; in September, he begins to retreat again, and removes himself from his harbour to visit his Winter quarters, which will be much the same as before, if no floods disorder him. This is his yearly course, to change according to heat or cold, so that a Pike, like a person of quality, hath both a Winter and a Summer house.

As to his daily transaction, he thus disposes of himself : in a hot, gleamy day, he gets to the surface of the water, as if he had a desire to exchange his element to enjoy the comfortable influence of the airy region ; he then scorns to be tempted with a bait, and can live all day with a little more nourishment than the motes in the sun ; for you can no sooner offer him the kindness of a deceitful bait, but he is gone as swift as lightning to his lowest retirements. There are some that will make such brags of their art, that they have the confidence to say, they can find a Pike as easily in his seat as an old hare-finder can take Puss in her furr ; and that the same Pike will as infallibly take his bait as an hungry dog will leap at a crust : they would make you believe, they are good accomptants, and

such water-arithmeticians, they can tell the number of fish in the river as well as graziers can count their sheep and beasts in their pastures.

These stories are too romantic to gain the credit of sober fishermen; though one that hath had much experience, and made it his business, may give a near guess where the fish lie: some places are more probable than others, though you will often meet with them in the middle as well as by the sides, and sometimes unexpectedly where there is no conveniency of shelter or repast.

A ford that is clear and gravelly at the bottom, especially if it have a pit adjoining to it that is deep and weedy, is looked upon as a probable place; for though they generally affect a deep water, yet they will get as near as they can to a ford or shallow: there they delight themselves, and sport with the little fry; so scoures and pits that are near mills, either above or below them, are commonly well stored with fish: a mill-dam that is deep and weedy is an approved receptacle for them. Those rivers that are straight and level, are not so good to fish as those that are crooked and have many corners and turnings; for the fish will get into those creeks and channels, and hide themselves in private apartments. If the water is narrow, it is more pleasing for the troller; for where it is very broad and deep, there is more uncertainty: if it is narrow, you may fish both sides, and sooner chop

upon them; you will then go on the faster and with more courage, and drive forward to your journey's end; but this is chiefly as every one fancies, for some desire the widest places they can find, and there to fix themselves two or three hours without any considerable motion: I never approved of that dull way, as thinking it needless and impertinent to cast three or four times in the same place, because a Pike, if he bites, commonly rises at it the first throw, though he may sometimes snap at it, when you have the least thoughts of him.

As to the nature or constitution of the river, the deeper is generally the better and the safest harbour; although he delights in a middle retirement, about four foot in depth is a right proportion, and the best pitch for the Troller; for if it be much deeper, they are the more difficult to stir, and harder to find; and if shallower, they will be apt to see you, and so shun the enticements of a treacherous friend. Small Jacks will often lie within two, or sometimes one foot in water; it is the wisest course in such places to keep at a distance, and not come nigh the river till the bait is in.

CHAP. V.

The best Seasons for Trolling.

THERE are some that pretend to trolling, and yet observe no time or season to be better than another: a Pike indeed will bite

more or less at any time, let him set out when he will; but to go out at all adventures, is a very uncertain and unsecure way: as to the heat in Summer, and frost and snow in Winter, he had better make hay in the one, and sit by the fire in the other: some will brag of their hardy constitutions, that they can break the ice with one hand, and take out fish with the other, and can slide a trolling (like Dutchmen) on their skates, and not be sensible of the inclemency of the air: they will be still for fishing, when the weather is more proper for fowling; they will pretend they can charm the fish at Christmas with a sweet bait, will present their landlord with a Pike at new-year's-tide; these (I confess) are artists far beyond our profession, if their performances are as large as their promises.

There are some days (we grant) in the depth of winter, as in December or January, that a man may pick out to stand two or three hours by the river-side, but the weather must be open and temperate; the great fish will be then soonest enticed with the bait at that time of year, because they lie deep, and are not so careful of their own preservation. There is another great advantage for the Winter troller, the weeds are then down and rotten, which before was a great hinderance both for throwing the bait, and in keeping the fish from the sight of it. Though a Pike delights much among the weeds, and does usually make his abode there, yet it is very difficult to take

him there, except it be with the snap; for if you give him the liberty of running and playing with your bait, he winds himself so fast about the weeds, that you may be in some danger of losing both your fish and hook, if your line is not very strong: if you take a snap, you will be troubled with them, for they are great enemies to that.

To begin the year, February is the first, and none of the worst months he can pitch upon for his sport; after Candlemas, if the season is moderate, and the water in tune, which is very rare, for if it is not a flood, as it is often at that time, yet the ditches and brooks are commonly so rank and full, that it is but indifferent fishing; but if it chance to be a dry season and open, it is one of the best months. So is March very seasonable to the Troller, excepting the time of spawning, which usually begins about the middle, unless the Spring is very forward; and then they will be sick sooner. The Snap is then the only way. If you fish at Pouch, you may have many runs, but scarcely take one, except it be a male-fish. These two months will try the fisherman's patience, whether he is wind and weather proof; the next is April, which will make him amends for his former sufferings; and is a month so inviting to sport, that it is both pleasant and profitable; the chirping birds then begin to seek their mates, and the long silent Cuckoo that forsook her cold climate, does again salute her spouting bran-

ches, and tell us the news of an approaching Summer; you may then please yourself to see the tender Swallow so joyful at her first flight, when she seems to make obeisance to your bait, and displays her wings upon the surface of the waters. This month you will find most propitious to your pastime, because the weeds, which have couched all Winter, have not yet erected their heads to annoy the bait, or frustrate the hopes of an impatient fisherman. This month, I say, is usually successful for this diversion, because the river is then clear of fog and filth; and also that the fish, which have lately cast their spawn, are now more hungry and ready for their prey; there is now little fear of their forsaking your bait as they did in March. They are not yet arrived to that fatness and firmness which they will get in Summer, but are many of them flamp and thin; the *individuum* decreasing to multiply the species.

The beginning of May is likewise very seasonable, especially if it hits with the proverb cold and windy; towards the latter end of it, the weeds spring up, and are very offensive to the hook; then begins the Troller's vacation, which continues till the latter end of August, or the beginning of September; yet those who are afraid of an ague at Spring, or Fall, may choose themselves the coolest, cloudy day they can find in June or July to exercise their skill; but then they will be sure to take more weeds than fish.

As to the Autumnal season, October is the principal month, the weather being then temperate, and the weeds which were strong and high before, now die and fall to the bottom. The rivers are then generally low, which is a great advantage, because the fish are more easily found in their harbours; they leave the shallows and scoures, and lodge themselves in pits and the deepest places: A Pike is now very firm and fat, having had the benefit of the Summer's food; and if the weather continues dry and not extraordinarily cold, you may take in part of November, which will add much to your sport, because the weeds will be more wasted and rotten; but if a flood comes in October, or the beginning of November, you may lay aside your tackling for that season: for great rivers (like great vessels), being long in filling, and slowly mounting to their full height, are again long in falling and settling; so that the water will be thick and out of order, except frost or fair weather comes to clear it. In small brooks and rivulets it is not so, you may fish there again within a week or less after the flood. If such inconveniences put off your designed sport, you must desist till the following Spring, when the days will be longer, though the weather colder. As to the time of day, the morning and evening is best in Summer; because towards noon the fish get to the top of the water, and are more mindful of their play than their meat. If the day

be clear and calm, a snare is more proper than a bait; for the least motion you can make with your line will affright a fish that lies high; and if he is once moved and put to the flight, all the art you can use will not entice him to your bait again: besides it will then be too hot for sport; for heat creates no appetite in any thing, much less in fish: its the wind, and the cooler clouds, when Zephyrus curls the waves with a brisk gale, that invites a fish to repast; those hot and sultry days are fittest for the float, when the fish are for some light diet; and the angler has the best pastime with flies and bees, &c. At such a time of year, early or late is the best fishing, if it is in the night. As to the Winter or Spring quarter, one part of the day is as favourable as the other; for then the Sun being not so hot, it neither molests the fisher, nor takes away the fishes stomachs. If the day be dark and cloudy, you will find but little difference; if any noon is the best time, or about ten or eleven o'clock; you will be then glad of a warm blast, when your fingers can scarcely feel whether they are fish or flesh. Some are very scrupulous concerning the wind, and will not stir a foot except it stand in what corner they would have it, though upon such a nicety I scarcely ever denied myself a day of diversion. A Northern wind indeed is more sharp and piercing; and will weary the fisherman's patience, and the North East carries a Proverb with it, enough

to discourage a fresh-water soldier; yet this I have observed, that in a right and seasonable time of year, the fish will bite, let the wind stand where it will. The South and the South-West have the general applause, because they are more pleasing to the Troller; and it is granted that the fish are more brisk and quicker at the bait, and perhaps they may then have more sport than when the wind is contrary; yet this is certain, that the colder the wind is the closer the fish lie to the bottom, and farther in their harbour, which may hinder you of having so many bites as when they lie out and more open in a warmer day: yet the air being cold and sharp, it makes them hungry; and if you are careful, you may have as many fish as bites: besides a fish of any bigness, is too cunning to be cheated of his life, if he lies not securely in the deeps, or invisible among the weeds; for as old birds are not to be taken with chaff, so an old fish that hath been already pricked in the gills or pouch, is very cautious in making a second adventure. All the principal and chiefest time for Trolling may be epitomized into four months, two of which attend the Spring and two the Fall: part of March may conveniently be left out, which will only tantalize with runs and afford you no fish, if you use the Pouch; neither will they then bite so freely as they will about a fortnight after, they are then very averse and indifferent in their feeding; the reason of which, some do

ascribe to the multitude of Frogs which then engender and breed in the waters: though I have not been of that opinion; for supposing the fish feed upon frogs, which I could seldom observe, especially in the deep streams and running waters, where the frogs very rarely come; for they generate for the most part in pits and standing pools, amongst filth and mire: yet notwithstanding this, the fish prey upon them at that time, yet it will not hinder your sport, but they will often take your bait; for a Pike is of that greedy and rapacious nature, that although he hath lately made a good meal of frogs, yet he will taste a Roach for his second course. He takes so much pleasure and delight in eating, that he never cares to stint himself; or physically, for his health's sake, or content with moderate diet; for I have often taken him so soon after his feeding, that he hath had part of his meat in his mouth; having newly swallowed so large a fish, that his ventricle was neither capable to receive or digest it quickly; sometimes I have taken him with two or three baits in his maw; sometimes with a great Roach or Dace; sometimes with one of his own species, very seldom with a frog in his belly; a frog is accounted a good bait once a year, that is about hay-time, when it looks bright and yellow, though then it is something difficult to find; in March they are very plentiful, but are not of that golden colour, to make the fish enamoured with their

beauty. This may be granted, that a pike will feed to that excess and fulness, that he cannot gorge your bait, yet will rise and shew himself, and make many offers, having a good will to it, that you may often catch him with the snap.

CHAP. VI.

The food of a Pike, and when he is fattest.

IF you divide the year in four quarters, a Pike is good three of them; the Spring excepted. I could never find any difference in the eating. It is a usual saying, that a Pike and a Buck are in season together; that is in July and August: he is then very firm, hard, and solid; you will find little alteration in September and October, which are the chiefest months for the goodness of a fish; for small Jack eat always loose and washy; (like many terrestrial animals) grows too fast to be fat, and therefore ought to be let alone till he gets bigger. One about two feet, or or twenty-six inches, is most grateful to the palate; a male fish of that size is generally fat and delicious.

Physicians affirm that the chyle or juice of such a fish concocted, is more wholesome to the stomach than one of the largest proportion; though all fish are naturally light and of easy digestion. A Pike indeed cannot be too big to make a present, on a public occasion, and the sauce answerable to the Pike; for if it

swim not in sauce and liquor, it had been better still swimming in the river. Such a fish (which may be supposed about forty inches) will feed to an incredible fatness; some say more, but I can testify that a quart of fat hath been taken out of the belly of one: it must be a great charge and expence to feed a Pike to that bigness that some have credibly affirmed, that a Pike is as costly and as long a feeding as an ox. Now as to the difference of fish, one out of a river that is fat, is far better and sweeter than one fed in a pond; except he is taken out of the pond, and put into a running stream, to clear awhile before he is eaten. Some that are curious, have stews and fountains for that purpose, and can draw them at their pleasure, choosing the fattest, and throwing in the rest.

As to the food of a Pike, small fry will keep him very well, though not to make him thrive and fatten; Griggs, or small Eels cut on the backs, and cast in a few at a time, are his most nourishing and fattening diet. The way of throwing bullocks' blood into a pond, panches and guts, are not wholesome food; is it possible that fish may feed upon such stinking and noisome food, and grow fat? they are only fit for them to eat that feed them with such trash. You may easily distinguish a fed Pike from one in a wasting condition: they differ in the colour, which is usually yellow and spotted, but white and pale in a thin lean fish: you may also distin-

guish them by the weight and bulk, if they are much of a length; observing the breadth of the back and sides: for those fish that have full and extended bellies, are often deceitful, and may be full of spawns instead of fat: the male Pike is generally firm and inviting to the eater, but the spawners or sow-fish (as some call them) are out of season great part of Summer; for before and after they have spawned, they are scarcely worth the Troller's labour. Some observe that they multiply twice a year, at the beginning of Spring, and again the latter end of Summer, which is not improbable.

There are many circumstances that conduce much to the feeding of a Pike, as first a convenient harbour; for they that lie among weeds and foggy places are fattest; they are there secure from the assaults and disturbance of enemies, and enjoy a more safe and contented repose; rest and quietness being as natural and helpful to their feeding as to other creatures: there are some waters that may be more feeding and nourishing than others. A thicker sort of water, if not foul and muddy, is of a better consistency, and the parts better disposed and qualified for nutrition, than those of a more thin and rarified substance: it is a rule in philosophy, that no element that is pure and without mixture is consentaneous for nourishing; so that they have put it among their vulgar errors, that the camelion cannot live by air alone, or the sa-

lamander by fire: so we deny that fish can live by pure water, or by respiration, or sucking in those slender particles of his beloved element, without the concurrence and assistance of some grosser and terrene qualities, which are intermingled with those liquid bodies. This is the reason why fish are the fattest, though not altogether the sweetest, among weeds and thick fog; they live and thrive with a little more refreshment than what they receive from that fatness which the soil imparts: if there is great store of rubbish in a pond or river, there needs a less supply of adventitious food.

It is a common observation, that after a glut of rain, or some great showers, a Pike never bites well, because he hath lately fed upon those fresh streams that come in from the banks and ditches; and indeed that reason may be probably true; for though rain-water of itself can have but little or no more strengthening quality than the river; yet it scouring through the channels, and washing the land and earth as it passeth, may from thence receive a firmer and more solid substance, which may make it more glutinous and congruous for nutrition. It is possible that a Pike may live a great while in a clear pool, where there is neither small fry for prey, nor harbour to shelter, nor any quantity of fog which might give him subsistence; certainly he will be dissatisfied with that course of life, and as much discontented with those short com-

mons, as one that hath not been used to a prison-life, is there put in and fed with nothing but bread and water. I could never hear of any that made trial of this merely for experiment's sake ; some persons have put a stock of Pikes into their ponds, and have not regarded to put in meat proportionable to their number, yet have preserved it many years, denying both themselves and others the liberty of fishing in it ; have drawn it afterwards, expecting a plentiful increase, and have found nothing answerable to their expectations : so great a diminution of them must either be caused by the devouring Otter, or secret stealth (which is scarcely probable, they being watched so narrowly) ; or else they must infallibly languish and die for want.

Some fish might escape such a mortality, and might still live and grow, but it must be those that were bred in the place, and not those that were taken out of the river and put in the pond to feed, for alteration of water among fish, as well as change of air or ground among beasts, is of much consequence, being very beneficial to some, & destructive to others. Not but they are much advanced that are translated from a worse to a better condition.

It is well known that Fen-fish brought up into clear waters will thrive, and are sweeter ; but whether those that are bred in brooks and small streams, carried and put into fen-ditches will change for the better or the worse, is worth enquiry.

CHAP. VII.

Baits for Trolling.

HAVING already discoursed of the nature of Pike, and discovered his Harbour and Feed, and the time and seasons most proper to take him; the next will be to provide Instruments and Tackle, and Baits fit and suitable to every season. Some there are that vary their Baits according to the time of the year, using small fish in Winter, and frogs, &c. in Summer. I cannot disapprove of that way, though I seldom made use of others than a small fish, a Roach, or a Dace, sometimes a Gudgeon, which if large is an excellent bait; it being a sweet fish: a Pike very rarely leaves it, if it is a dark colour, and therefore is most proper to be used in a bright day, or when the waters are very clear.

If the river is muddy, or the weather cloudy, then a Roach, Dace, or a Bleak newly taken, are the best baits that can be used; the fresher they are the better, for fish are the soonest stale of any thing, and a Pike may chance to catch at a stale bait, and play with it briskly at first, but it is great odds that he leaves it at last, if he is not extraordinarily pinched with hunger. A stale bait (we acknowledge) may make a good shift sometimes, but it must be neither in Summer, nor in spawning-time; in October or April they are not so curious, but they can dispense

with indifferent diet; and in cold weather, a bait may keep two or three days, and yet be very serviceable, especially at Snap, which makes no difference in baits, as to the sense of tasting; if they look bright and glisten in the water, it is not material whether they are old or new; which affords a greater variety of baits than that of pouch.

Any thing that may affect the eye, may be used at Snap; some will take a piece of hard cheese, or pack-wax, a rasher of bacon, or sheep's gut, or almost any thing that is radiant and shining; some will float on the top with a live bird, a Swallow, or a Sparrow; though I judge that may be more out of curiosity than for profit or sport. I never admired this way of Snap, as thinking it too quick and surprising, to give any diversion; the sport of Trolling consisting more in the managing the bite, in the playing of a Pike, and his eager biting and running with the bait, than just a word and a blow, snapping him up and putting him into the bag.

One time of the year the Snap is best, that is in March, when they are sick and about casting their spawn; for then if your Snap-hook is made the right way, with springs to strike sure, you may take four or five in the time the Pouch takes one: some fancy the Snap-hook plays the bait more lively and naturally, though there may be no great difference, especially if the Pouch-hook be fastened to the line with a swivel, which is very conducive to the playing of a bait.

Some there are that fish with live baits, and have short hooks fashioned accordingly, with more joints and without lead; but that is rather a destroying and poaching way, than any fair fishing; it makes such a slaughter amongst the fish, that it is not fit to be used; for I have known some rivers that have been quickly eased of their burden of fish by that unlawful trade.

The method they use is to lay in three or four score of these hooks, which may reach almost a mile; after they have lain four or five hours, or more; or presently after they have done the last, they begin to take up the first; so that they will kill perhaps a score of Pikes and Jacks; which way (if allowable) is the ready course to empty a river, and engross all the sport to themselves: two or three at a time is enough to content any moderate Troller, that would have others partake of the recreation as well as himself, and not fish above once or twice in a season at the same place. The means to preserve and continue this sport is to favour and cherish it. It is an easy matter indeed to take half a dozen, or more, if he would stick at it a whole day in the beginning of the year, before the waters are beaten or dragged, then they are so plentiful, that they shew themselves in every corner.

As for a sweet and delicious bait, a piece of an Eel may be preferred, which if once taken and tasted, a Pike will assuredly feed

upon it; this may be experienced in ponds and stews, when they throw in Griggs to feed the Pikes. Of all the small fish, a Perch makes the worst bait, yet that may be used in a case of necessity, if you first cut off the fins and prickles on his back, though when you have done all you can, it will be but to little purpose; for a Perch is like a prince among the fish, and a Pike is in so much fear of him, and hath that antipathy against him, that he will sooner fasten upon one of his own kind than upon him; yet I have seen small Perch taken out of a Pike's belly, but it was in a mote where he was kept short and had little else to feed upon: but if you are confined to this bait, and can get no other, it is best to scrape off some of the scales, it being a dark fish, it will make it brighter; and still the Snap is the best hook for it, because if the scales of the Perch are on, a Pike cannot easily gorge or digest it. A small Jack is a far better bait; though it seems unnatural, yet fish are not bound to observe the laws of nature; if it be a foot long, it may be cut in two, and so made use of: a young Chub may be very useful, or any fish that shines in the water; a Bleak is a very bright fish. The way to keep and preserve your baits till you have occasion to use them, is first to take a cast net and throw it, choosing those that are most fit for the purpose; having a trunk ready to put them in, and then to take them out by two or three as occasion serves. In Summer time you

may take them with an angle, but that is very uncertain ; nor can you have any choice that way, because they will often be too little or too big, besides it spends too much time that is intended for Trolling. Sometimes you may take with one bait fresh out of the trunk, three or four Jacks, or more ; for a fish that bites greedily and swallows the bait presently, does not tear it so much as one that plays with it in his mouth and then leaves it ; for a bait is not much worse for being chopt and full of holes, provided it hangs well upon the hook, and the lead is not seen ; for one Pike will feed very well after another, and the bait will be still the sweeter the more it is bitten, if not used so long as to be water-sopt: the scales of a Roach or Dace are a great preservation to it, as also light and perspicuous, which render it more visible to the eyes of the great devourer: as to the definitive number of baits, it cannot be positively determined : two or three, if fresh, will last long enough, if you have not very ill luck with him ; for sometimes the first fish that bites will tear the bait, so that it will make it unserviceable, and yet not take the Pike ; but the weeds are most destructive to your baits, especially when they are strong and tough, so that if you are not careful in tying the tail of the bait fast to the joint of the wire, the weed will consume it before the Pike comes. Some fish will hold better than others ; a Dace is one of the hardest, and will endure the

longest; but a Gudgeon is but a tender fish, and will soon burst. One fresh bait will wear out two or three stale ones: besides these natural baits, there are a sort of artificial ones, which are made so exquisitely to resemble the other, that they will delude the eyes of some men, much more the fish; if they only look, and not feel or touch with the finger, there is no doubt to be made of the reality of the fish. Some pretend to fish at Pouch with these artificial deceits, though it is more probable they were designed for the Snap; for a Pike is endued with a perfect sense of tasting, and therefore will scarcely be courted to gorge and digest that which he can neither taste nor smell. There are indeed some of those artificial baits made after the Pouch fashion, whether for sight or service, I cannot conceive; for I more admired the curiosity and ingenuity of the artificer, than any extraordinary excellency or usefulness in the thing. A Pike must be very hungry that gorges one of them, and he must do it hastily and greedily, for if he stays to consider, and plays much with it, as some of them do, his curious and delicate palate will presently distinguish a fresh and well-relishing morsel from a dry and insipid bit.

Those that are covetous may have two strings to their bow, by taking a Gudgeon of a middle size, or a large Minow, for then they may be in hopes of taking large Perches as well as Pikes, for a Minow is an ex-

cellent bait for a Perch ; great baits invite a Pike, but little ones are more secure to take him.

CHAP. VIII.

Pouch-Hook.

OF Pike or Jack hooks, there are several sorts, both for the Snap and Pouch, the latter of which we shall only endeavour to describe in this place ; though the spring-hooks are esteemed excellent, and strike sure, the ordinary plain Snap-hook will miss often. Pouch-hooks there are many sorts, though I never made use of them :—It is best to choose them of a dark, bluish colour, the lead not very gross, but neatly covered, without any flaws or hollows in it.

If it be pretty weighty, it plays the bait the better ; this is supposed of a single hook, though a double one is the same as to the lead and joints of the wire. I commonly made use of the single hook, which strikes as sure as the other. The double hook hath one advantage above the other, that if it meets with such resistance in the water, that it loses one side of it, the other part, with a little filing, may be still as serviceable as it was before : it is more troublesome in the water, and more apt to check and take hold of the weeds and roots ; it is best for a great bait, for if you put a small and slender bait on a double hook, it will hang out and bear off so

much in the bending, that a Pike may not only discover the delusion and craft, but if he takes it, it may check him in his feeding, and so hinder him from gorging it. There are two or three sorts of double hooks, besides that of the Snap; some are flat and are bent back to back.

There is another sort that is more sloped, and the bents closer together; others that have a round bent, much after the form of the Snap, which must always have a full bend, and very large; that is baited by fixing the hook in the middle of the bait, and may have the lead fastened to the wire. The way to use, is to strike soon after the fish bites, and as the Pike runs one way to strike the contrary.

In the choice of hooks, you may have some regard to the wire, that it is not rugged or knotty; for if it is not sound and strong, you may lose both your fish and hook. The first joint of it which is next the lead, must be so long that the tail of the bait may not reach over it, for if it does, you cannot well fasten it to the joint, though in time of necessity you may untwist the wire of the upper joint, and there fix the thread. Some baits are short, as Roaches; some are longer as Daces, Bleaks, or large Gudgeons, which require that the hook and wire are both long and proportionable to it. The other joint which is fastened to the line must be twice or thrice the length of the other; lest when the Pike hath gorged the bait deep into his

ventricle, the wire is not long enough to reach out of his mouth, and so he cuts the line with his teeth; this joint had need be very fine and smooth; if it be rugged, it tears the bait when you put it on. If this is stiff and strong, you need not that which they call the arming wire to help you to thrust it out of the tail of your bait; you may sometimes search your wire, lest it be faulty or broken, especially the lowest joint, for there it often breaks, and may deceive you.

There are other sorts of hooks for ledger-baits; those are used with live fish, and are not leaded: the hook is rather shorter than the others, but the wire hath usually more joints. The lines for these need not be so long as the trolling-line; they are thrown into the water, and so gaged with a stick; for a Pike will not so soon take a bait off the ground, as if it swims about a foot or more from the bottom. The way of fishing with ledger-baits is too destructive to be made a common practice, and far below the diversions of a fair fisherman.

The best hooks are those that break and snap rather than stand bent, or the least moved from their first shape; there is a variety in hooks, good and bad; it requires caution to choose the best.

When you fasten the wire to the line, be sure to tie it with a right knot; if your tackle is new and sound, you need not fear to venture among fog or weeds, or any thing

but roots and stumps of trees, which may hold play with a cart-rope.

The safest and most secure way of fastening is first to tie one single knot, and then one that will slip, or else only the slipping knot, allowing it an inch or two of line, then drawing it close, first try it with all your strength before you put it into the water. It is a neat way to fasten it with a swivel, tying it close with a bit of thread; this plays the bait better, giving it a turn when you stir it, which makes it glisten and swim like a live fish.

CHAP. IX.

The Trolling-Line.

THE line is one of the most necessary members that is required, for an ordinary and indifferent hook may be dispensed with, as also the rod; but if your line is not strong, and of a considerable length, you can have but little hopes of success. The best materials for a line is green or blue silk, which cerulean colour is most resembling water. It may be only fancy that one colour is of more consequence than another, yet sometimes pleasing the fancy does so much enliven and encourage the fisherman, that it makes him the more active; and if his fancy diverts him another way, he will take the less care.

Next to silk, the best sort of green thread, though it is neither so handsome nor so dura-

ble as silk, yet it may last a year or two; but wears like other things, according to the care and good keeping of the user; for if it is laid up wet and on a heap, as soon as you have done fishing, and take no more care of it, you may rot as many lines as you catch Pikes. The best way of preserving it is to wax it: sometimes with bees'-wax, and when it is wet to wind it up loosely in long foldings, that the air may come in to dry it, or else let it dry at length, and then wind it upon a roll; with such usage, a silk-line will last beyond your expectation.

Silk and hair may be mingled in the making of a line; some make them of silk and silver, thinking that way to preserve it; though the addition of silver may be rather to please their fancy and the gayety of their humour than to keep their line from perishing: such as those should have silver hooks to their silver lines: if it cannot take fish itself in the water, it may take them ready caught, and so be useful in saving their credit.

There are other sorts of coarse lines very short, not above half the length of the trolling-line, which are to fish with a ledger-bait, or to lie all night, being tied to a float, and cast into the water.

These are not made of such fine stuff, nor so well twisted as the other, and only serve in some exigencies, as when a Pike that will not be invited by trolling, may be better pleased with a bait that is laid for him, he

will sometimes so humble himself as to take it off the bottom; but it is the wiser to tie a stick or a cork to the line, that it may hang about a foot or more from the ground, observing the wind, for if you throw it in against the wind, it will drive it backwards, and carry the bait close to the side; and though a Pike often harbours by the side, yet the middle hath more scope and advantage of drawing him to it; for these laying lines, the worst sort will serve, because lying so long in the water will rot them.

As to the length of the line, it is good to have enough, for though a short line may do in a brook or some narrow place, where the Pike must either run up or down, and so you may follow, yet if you come to a broad reach, where the fish runs across the stream to the farther side, you may often miss of your Pike for want of a few yards of line; if he be the least curbed or stopt in his speedy career, and not have his full swing, he is checked, and leaves his suspicious prey; this I have often found by experience, though my line was long enough, yet having a knot in it that would not quickly pass, being so entangled that it shortened it, by that means have lost very good fish.

As to the length, about thirty yards is a good medium for the Pouch, I cannot see any reason why it need be so long at Snap, for though they may throw out as far at Snap, you strike as soon as he bites, and let him

run no further, whereas at Pouch he may go as far as you please.

It is true that the line at Snap ought to be thicker and stronger, for a sudden jerk may break it; it need not be so long, because that is only for casting in, and a Pike will sometimes run farther with it than it can be thrown; so that I have seen those that have fished at Snap with no longer line than what was tied to the rod, and so cast it up and down like an angle.

As to the managing of the line, you may wind it upon a roll that turns upon a ring, with your finger in it, having no more in your hand than you make use of, so you may unwind it at your leisure.

Some draw it after them at length, which I approve as a very good way; if there is no impediments, as shrubs or bushes, to interrupt or make them go back: it will be ready to cast out, and you may throw it the farthest; if you hold a great deal loose in your hand, it will be apt to knot and entangle, which will try the fisherman's patience. Some object drawing the line upon the ground, it will wear it out sooner, it sooner dries, and when it is dry, it can take but little harm; besides a Pike will sometimes be so hasty and furious, that he will scarcely give you leave to unwind fast enough, and therefore the surest way to trapan him is to have your line at command, and in complete readiness.

CHAP. X.

The Rod.

SUPPOSING your hook is good, and your line strong, you may make shift with an indifferent rod; though some are more curious in their tackle, and patient in fishing, and will not stir a foot without all the formalities of an exquisite fisherman: such precise crafts-masters as these can spend their time in admiring their instruments, and sufficiently delight themselves with the commendation of their own materials. This is certain and undeniable, that the longer the rod is, if it is straight and light, you will find the more benefit in playing the bait and throwing it, for if there are flags or reeds between the bank and the main deep, you can hardly play your bait with a short rod. I have often put a ring upon my hand-stick, and made use of that instead of a rod, and have had the fortune sometimes to take a Pike: sometimes I have taken nothing with me, but confided in the willows that grew next to the place designed for that day's recreation, cutting down as good a stick as I could find, and so making a bent at the end for the line to slip; and have left it at the conclusion of the sport.

In a broad river, or a pond, being at a pinch, I have had no rod, but took the bait in my hand, and cast it from me like a stone to the length of my line, the end I fasten

about me. In some places, they fish that way where the river is deep and clear from weeds. I never accustomed myself to a long rod, and I generally made use of an elder as long as I could get, commonly about three yards long, which I barked and kept dry for lightness and easy carriage: when it was thoroughly dry it was tough and light, that I could scarcely feel it in my hand; and there is no objection to be made, that such a stick is too weak; for any thing is strong enough at Pouch that will play the bait and throw it; there is no weight or stress upon the rod, and but little upon the line; if you strike the fish gently and play him slightly and dexterously, you may tire him with a slender line, if it be long, and can keep him from weeds and roots. At Snap, your tackle must be fitted accordingly, your line very strong, and your rod on purpose, of a good ash, withy, or hazel well dried; straight and tough, that it may be able to draw him out *nolens volens*, by mere force. He that uses that way is scarcely a word and a blow, for the mistaken fish no sooner lays his mouth upon the deceitful bait, but he is brought up into another element. The way of Pouch is far more mild and flattering, though as much destructive and pernicious.

If you use an ash or an hazel rod, you must have a ring fixed at the end, some have two, or more, though I see no necessity of that superfluity. If it be an elder or a cane, or any

hollow wood, you may have an iron ring made to screw in at the top, or else that which may be as well, a piece of dry alder that is cut sharp and sloping, about three or four inches long, which you may stick fast in the end of the rod; some have only a ring with a little screw very short. If your rod be of alder, it will be apt to crack, you may secure that by binding the end of it hard with a waxed thread, and then you may thrust in the top without any danger of breaking or cleaving the rod.

A dry withy, or hazel, bored about twelve or fourteen feet, will make an excellent rod; which may serve for angling, only putting a top into it, as also at Snap. It is a great ease to have a light rod, get it the proper season, and let them stand near the fire, or in some dry place for the space of half a year or more; for if your rod be green and heavy, it will tire you, and be a great hinderance.

The truth is, if sport be quick, scarcely any thing can vex or discompose the fisher; for he is then so attentive on his pleasure, that he takes little notice of those inconveniences which otherwise might be trouble and vexation; he then regards neither wind nor weather, and disdains those slight perturbations of cold, thirst, or hunger; he hath then gotten the Philosopher's stone which sweetens all his other crosses, and turns all disasters into gold. His sport is a cordial for all his distempers, and the Pike (like a good water-

physician) cures him of all his diseases. If weary, his sport refreshes him; if cold, it warms him; if melancholy, it cheers him; if drowsy, it revives him; if in pain, it eases him; if sick, it recovers him: he then feels not the weight of his rod, nor is concerned that his tackling is no better. This is the prosperity of the fisher; but if you see him in adversity, when fortune does not smile on his endeavours, you shall find him much altered, and in a contrary condition; supposing (I say) the thing called luck does not attend him, which should refine all the dross of outward misfortunes, he is then so much at a loss, and dejected, that he can expect but a bitter potion. Patience and hope are the two chief pillars that support the building of a fisherman; for if they are once disturbed or shaken, you may easily foresee the ruins of Piscator.

If you desire to be private, you may walk out with an oak stick, or the like, in your hand, taking a ring with a screw at it; you may deceive the expectations of others, and pass on without the least suspicion.

CHAP. XI.

How to Bait, and play the Bait.

THOUGH you are perfectly furnished with all sorts of tools and instruments that are required to make a fisherman, you are as thoroughly accoutred with all the mate-

rials and utensils for fishing as Piscator himself could possibly be; yet if you know not how to use these implements, you will be soon weary, and despair learning the art of trolling. Provided then that your baits are ready, take a couple of hooks at least with you; you may bait them before you set out, especially if the weather is cold, that it may not trespass on your patience when you come to the river.

The way then to bait your hook is first to thrust your wire into the mouth of the fish, quite through the belly and out at the tail. Some have besides the running wire a needle on purpose, but if the first joint of your wire is stiff and strong, it may be done with that: the point of the hook must be even with the belly of the bait; for if it hang on either side, it may hinder and check the pike, who will probably lay his mouth upon it; for when he chops cross the fish, he may be pricked, and so leave the bite: when you have put it through the fish, then tie the tail of the bait fast to the joint of the wire with strong thread, which will both make it hang straight upon the hook, and preserve it from outward violence; for if it is not well fastened, the weeds will have so much power over it, that they will soon tear it down to the gills, and separate the hook from the bait: some fasten it with a needle.

The best way of fixing your hook to the line is with a swivel, which if you have not,

you may make it fast with a slip knot, which you may untie without cutting your line.

When you are thus prepared for your intended sport, then drop in your bait before you, then cast it on each side, and let the third throw be before you into the middle; afterwards cast about all places where you think your Game lies, or any where that you can fish without annoyance; for a Pike often delights in a very unlikely and improbable harbour; and therefore the surest way to meet with him is to fish true and close; missing as little of the river as you can, which though it is tedious, yet it is the only way to search and see what store of fish a river affords, and you may often have a bite, when you think least of it.

The farther you throw in your bait, the more advantage you gain, and more hopes of a bite, provided there is no impediments in your way, as weeds, roots, or the like; for if the place is foul or weedy, you cannot make out so far, but only drop in your bait here and there, by the sides and in holes that are clear and deep.

The weeds are bad enemies to the bait and hook, though a good hook, and a line answerable to it, will pull up the strongest. I cannot remember that I ever lost a hook by a weed alone, except it had some stump or root of a tree to assist it; candocks indeed, and bulrushes, will disfigure and annoy your bait, and almost discountenance a young un-

dertaker; for if the smallest bit of weed hang upon the hook, a Pike will be very squeamish to gorge it; though some affirm that he feeds upon a weed one time of the year, which they call Pickerel-weed.

Supposing that you have cast out a fair throw a dozen or twenty yards, which may easily be done if the river requires it, let it first have a little time to sink, then feel it and draw it gently towards you; for a Pike often takes it at the first sight, before it gets to the bottom, and if you snatch it hastily, you may discourage him, and be deprived of your sport: after you have given it an easy motion towards you, let it have the liberty of sinking again, then draw it slowly and softly, for if you jerk it too quickly and hastily, you will not give him leave to lay hold of the bait; for he will often shoot from the farthest sides, at a great distance, being so quick-sighted in the water. When you have got your bait near the bank, then play it longer there; first deep, for the deeper you fish the better, especially in cold weather; afterwards raise it higher and higher, by degrees, till you see it, and then you may often have the pleasure of seeing him take the bite: now you may assure yourself, if the proverb hold true, that seeing is believing.

There are indeed some sort of weeds and the stream together, which may often give encouragement by promising sport and performing none: they will sometimes so ex-

actly imitate a real bite, that an old and experienced fisherman may be mistaken with all his craft and cunning. The best way then to be sure, is to pull your line gently till you come to feel it, and if it be a fish, the moving of the bait will make him more eager, he will then strike out and gorge it; whereas if he lies still, he would very probably leave it. When you have raised your bait so high towards the top, within two or three feet, that you can perceive it glisten, you may then comfort yourself with the hopes of a Pike that may rise at it, as he often does, and therefore it is not prudent to be too hasty in taking out the bite.

When a Pike is once stirred, he will lie as it were watching for the bait, and catch greedily at it, if he does not see you; therefore you must be careful to keep a little distance upon the bank, for they will often take it at the very top, and sometimes leap out of the water at it; but they are then commonly so frightened, that they will not be courted to bite any more. You may fish as close as you will, though it is not material whether you throw two or three times in one place; for he is so hungry, that he usually embraces the first opportunity to lay hold.

Some troll with great corks and floats; it may do best with the ledger-bait, though I never approved of that way; for the weeds will make the float dance as exactly as a Pike, except he bite very greedily, and so you may

often be deceived; sometimes I grant you may distinguish and be sensible of your bite, if he runs, especially up the stream; but if he goes downwards and bites slowly, you cannot assure yourself whether it be a fish or a weed. If a place be free from weeds, you may make a good shift with a cork; though you may be often mistaken when you lay a little too deep, for the hook will draw along the bottom, and appear like a bite.

In some places, they troll without a rod, or playing the bait, as I have seen them throw a line out of a boat, and so let it draw after them as they row; but that must be a careless and unsafe way, for though they may have bites and offers, yet it must certainly check the fish so much that they will never pouch it: I cannot tell what art they may have at the Snap, though it is very improbable to have any as they go to work, without either rod or stick.

Besides those that are not endued with that excellent gift of patience, there are some of our young pretenders that have too much confidence, or rather too little skill; these will stand an hour or two in one place, as immoveable as the trees they stand by; they would force them to bite; and if there is never a Pike in the place where they are, they do their endeavours to wait till one comes. These are indefatigable craftsmen, can weary the fish sooner than themselves, and are neither discouraged with ill fortune, nor transported with good.

Baiting the hook with a frog I spoke nothing of, because I never made that any part of my practice; some frogs are thought to be venomous, as the land frog, or that which breeds by land: it is observed by some, that a Pike hath an antipathy against it; and of these there are several sorts, some speckled, some greenish, which are the most dangerous to touch; these breed by slime and dust of the earth, which turn to slime in Winter, and in Summer to a living creature. Carden gives a reason for the reigning of frogs, which proceed from putrefaction, and are not supposed to be that sort of frogs which engenders in February or March, and breeds in ditches by slime or blackish eggs. If you intend to troll with a frog, you must choose the yellowest you can get: first put your hook in his mouth, which you may do from May-day to the end of August, afterwards some say his mouth grows up, and so continues at least six months without eating, and is sustained, no one knows how (but the great Creator).

Put the arming-wire in at his mouth and out at his gills, and then with a fine needle and silk sow the upper part of his leg with only one stitch to the arming-wire, or tie the frog's leg to the upper joint of the wire; use him gently and he will live the longer: when you have thus baited, you may fasten your line to a bough, a bunch of flags, or a bundle of straw, and by the help of the wind they will cross a pond or mere. Some

will tie four or five live baits to bladders, and let them swim down the river, whilst they walk softly along the shore: others will fasten baits to ducks or geese, and so let them swim about the pond; if there is store of Pikes you may see excellent sport this way, for sometimes a great Pike will draw a duck under the water. This is the most proper to fish with live baits, and so gage your line with a forked stick with a nick or notch at one end of it, and put in line enough for him to have his full liberty of pouching. This is the ordinary way of fishing after that manner.

CHAP. XII.

How to Strike a Pike and Land him.

WHEN you have diverted yourself as long as you think proper, and can guess by the running of the Pike, what progress he hath made in his repast, by his ranging about for more; you may then hook him with a gentle jerk, and so take your fill of sport: for though we say of a Pike as of a thief, give him rope enough and he will hang himself, yet a fine gentle stroke will do no harm, but secure him. Supposing then that he has fed a little, you may observe what motions he makes. If he takes the bait greedily at bottom, and marches up the stream with it, or strikes across the river towards his hold, he will then probably lie still a little, while he is poaching, as you may feel him

check and tug ; if he goes quick, you may let him alone a little longer ; you may lose all for want of two or three minutes patience : if he hath lain still awhile the second time, and then runs with it, you may let him go if you have a desire to prolong the sport ; if not, you may draw your line straight, and with your rod give him an easy stroke, and so feel him by degrees till you come to see him ; but if he makes resistance and is very furious, let him have line enough, and give him his full swing : he will be very angry at first, till he is better pacified by losing his strength.

As soon as you strike him, you may conjecture of what bigness he is, for if he is large, you will find him strong and unruly in the water ; but if small and light, you can scarcely tell whether you have any thing or not ; or perhaps he may (for madness) leap out of the water as soon as he is pricked ; if he is a good one, as I say, you may either see or feel him, and you must be very cautious and take great care and diligence in getting him to shore : if the river is broad and your line short, you may lose him ; he will launch out with that extremity and violence, that though he cannot break the line, yet he will tear his own entrails if he is there hung.

Now if a fish takes your bait at the top of the water, and runs fiercely with it in the deep, and there lies still for some time, and you perceive that he does not pouch it, your remedy for that is to stir him a little, to make

him run and be more eager; then after he hath lain still and runs with it again, there is no great danger of losing that fish: when they leave it, they commonly throw it up, that is the first time they lie still. Sometimes he will take it again after he hath left it, and run to his hold, and play with it more than he did at first, shewing very good sport for a while, and after all leave you in the lurch. A fish that takes it greedily at the beginning, and carries it the farthest, does notwithstanding often forsake it: as the proverb says, *nil violentum est diuturnum*—so a Pike that bites so eagerly at first is not so at last; for it happens that he often leaves it: the only way to be even with such a fish is to take the Snap, and and that may chance to stop his career.

Now when you have a bite, and the fish goes down the stream, we are apt to conceive it is a small Jack; but on the contrary, if he sails slowly upwards with the bait, it is a sign of a good one; for the greater sort bite more calmly and moderately than the less; for they snatch, and away with it without any care or deliberation: old fish are more wary and cunning, they are sooner taken with a line laid for them all night than by trolling. It is something difficult to know what size a Pike is, before he is struck, and therefore there are none but may be mistaken in their conjectures; for an indifferent fish, I mean about 20 or 22 inches, will often make as good sport as one twice as big, however, be-

fore you strike him ; but then generally the bigger the Pike is the more sport. Sometimes he will take the bait very hastily, and run out to the length of your line, and never lie still, but will play up and down with it, till you think fit to strike him.

When the water is clear and not very deep, you may see him rise and take it ; so you may see the bait glisten as it lies across his mouth ; you may then see when he hath pouched, and know your time to strike.

When you have first struck him, you must be sure to have your line ready and slack, that he may take as much liberty as he will ; for when he finds himself hooked, he will use all his might and cunning to get away. As you feel him come easily towards you, you may be still drawing, till you feel him make resistance, then you may let him have his swing, till the heat of his fury is over ; gather your line to you, till he starts away, and if you can get him to the top, it will the sooner tire him ; the more he strives and throws himself from you, the sooner he will be weary : after this manner, by drawing him up and letting him run, you may tire and tame him, till you bring him to your hand ; then he will lie as quiet as if he was dead.

If you have hung him in the gills, you cannot loose him, though you pull him out by mere force, but if either in his gorge or his throat, he may deceive you, though he destroys himself, leaving you part of his guts on

the hook for a legacy, and dying soon after of his wounds. When you have brought him to the bank, you will find something to do before you can call him your own; for if you go unadvisedly to take him out, either by the back or the tail, or any part of his body, though you think his best is past, and his dancing days are done, he may give another leap, when you do not expect it; the best way then is to use fair means, and invite him to the land by persuasion, not compulsion, taking him by the head, and putting your fingers into his eyes, which is the fastest hold.

If the water is low, so that the bank rises some distance from it; you must not fear catching an ague, by laying your belly level with the ground; if you have no contrivance to guide him to a more commodious place: some will adventure to take him by the gills, though that hold is neither so secure nor so safe; because the fish, in that heat of passion, may take revenge upon his adversary, by letting him blood in his fingers, which way of phlebotomizing is not so good: some are of opinion that the teeth of a Pike are venomous, and those wounds are very difficult to be healed.

If there are reeds and shallows between you and the deep, or if the river is in that ebb that you cannot reach to lay hands on him; you must contrive some other means to conduct him to a more convenient landing. Have an eye of that when you first strike him, looking

up and down for the best advantage: if it is all along weedy, as it is commonly in ponds or meres, that you have no conveniency to bring him to your hand, you must then be content with the hopes of success, by committing yourself to the hands of fortune, having nothing to trust to but that which you may call fisherman's luck. If you have as well debilitated his strength and tired his patience, you may probably draw him out with no great reluctance, if the weeds be not too strong and friendly to their watery element.

Those that are more nice, have their net ready by them: this net is made in the fashion of a little sparrow-net, with a long trail and a pole at it, to translate Mr. Lucius out of his own into the airy element.

This is a delicate way of trolling: such as use it must have their attendants to assist them; that, as the Philosopher said, *omnia mea mecum Porto*. They will have their servants to carry their implements and tools: these are of more power on shore than in the water, and have more authority to command their retinue by land than the fish in the water.

CHAP. XIII.

How to preserve a river for Trolling.

THE way to preserve a river is to secure it from all enemies that are hurtful and destructive to it. The first and greatest, which

may be called the arch-enemy, is the drag-net, which is as unmerciful as an epidemical disease that sweeps all before it ; or as a greedy and covetous monopolizer engrosseth all in his own possession, and so verifies the old proverb, that all are fish that come to net. Some there are that commend the following of the drag to troll immediately after it ; these love to fish in troubled waters, for they say the dragging the river stirs up the fish, and makes them more ready to catch at their prey. I cannot applaud the practice, nor judge it any way reasonable, for though it is a hard battle where none escapes, and the drag, like an universal distemper, cuts off the major part, still there will be some left to renew their species, which, after a short time, will multiply and replenish the waters. This, I suppose, if there were none to come in and succeed them, as there are continually ; yet they will find such a scarcity and diminution among the fish, that their pastime will be very cold and uncomfortable, having nothing to trust to but those scape-drag, which are only like the gleanings when the harvest is gone.

Another enemy to the sport is the bow-net, though more favourable and sparing, and of a far lower class than the drag, yet it is more dangerous, it is private and undiscovered ; for the drag is a professed and a public foe, which gives some notice to avoid those places it hath lately cleansed ; but the

bow-net is so close and secret a murtherer, that it slays and leaves no visible wound.

Another plea there is that may be alleged for the drag, that it is seldom used above once, sometimes not so often as once a year; but the bow-net kills and destroys, spoils and plunders all the year: the Spring-time indeed is the fittest for it, when the fish run and get into the scoures, or else immediately after a flood; to lay many of these in small rivulets and ditches, they that use them may then make their harvest after a spring-flood.

The third enemy, is the stall or tramel; a net which is made up of great meshes, as it is so much the more allowable, because it holds only the great fish, and gives the less leave to escape. This net is not so common, nor so much condemned as the bow-net, because it is usually assisting the drag. In washes and back dykes it may do service, because there they may both draw it, and plunge on both sides; in the main river it can do no great execution, but only set as a stall to stop the fish. In one respect it is very murdering, because the meshes are made alike on both sides, that it takes the fish which way they come. They that use this sport, have commonly two to set at a little distance, and then they meet, and take most that are between them.

As to the cast net, it is rather a friend, and subservient to the troll, than an enemy to the sport. There is no way so good to take baits

as with it; because out of a multitude of fish which it takes, you may have your choice of baits. An angle indeed may make a shift sometimes in Summer, but that often takes either those that are too little or too big baits.

A cast-net to take small fry, to feed Pikes in a Pond, is necessary and beneficial many ways. Those that use it as destructive as they can, cannot revenge themselves much upon the Pikes; they may kill many small Jacks with it in shallow streams, but the great fish that lie deep and close, are too secure from the narrow compass of a cast-net: it may by chance fall upon a great one, yet if there are any weeds or fog in the place, and the net is not strong and well bulleted, and the Caster very weary in drawing it up, the Pike will deceive his expectations. In a clear place, where there are no impediments or obstructions, and the bottom smooth and level, it may enclose and draw up a good Pike; but where there are the least encumbrances to annoy the net, it is to be supposed, the fish will make his escape. The new sort of nets that are hung with chains instead of bullets, are too light for this service.

Next to the nets which kill by wholesale, the Trollers are often the greatest enemies one to another, especially the way of ledger-bait, which is very destructive, for that enticing way which they use with a live bait, and laying such an army of hooks, must weaken the forces of the watery militia.

Dead baits are not so pernicious, yet if they are too often used, they will lessen the fish; for at some seasons of the year, they will bite till there is almost none left in the place: the way to favour it is to be moderate, and not to beat a river too much, or with too many hooks; to fish more for pleasure than for profit, and to come but once or twice in a season to the same river.

The snare may do harm at the beginning of the year in a Sunny day and a clear water, that is only for bye-places and narrow scoures.

One of the greatest enemies is the water-dog, or Otter; he will walk five or ten miles to a pond in a night, and some have disputed whether he is a beast or a fish: he can smell a fish above a hundred yards, and then he devours them, and spoils more than he eats, leaving the head and great part of the back untouched. Gesner says that his stones are a good remedy against the falling sickness; and that there is an herb call Benione, which, being hung in a linen cloth near a fish pond, or any haunt that he uses, makes him avoid the place. There is so many of them in a river in Cornwall, that Camden says the name of it is called Ottersey, from the abundance of Otters that breed and are fed in it. Though this amphibious creature is chief regent, and is triumphant in the water, yet the greedy and audacious Pike, will sometimes set him at defiance, and give him battle; as

some have seen, that a Pike hath fought with an Otter for a Carp that he hath got.

It would not be amiss for the conservation of the waters to keep the fence months, which are three at the Spring in spawning-time; for if taking the dam on her nest when she hatches her young, is a sin so much against nature, that it was forbidden in the old law, certainly the taking fish in the time of their spawning, is as unlawful as well as unnatural.

Besides such unnatural Fishermen and all the enemies mentioned, the fish have many more, as the Bittern, the Cormorant, the Osprey, the Sea-Gull, the Hern, the King-Fisher, and many others; which, though they dare not attack the great Luce or Pike, yet they lessen the small fry which should feed and sustain the greater: sometimes they may devour young Jacks and Pickerel.

CHAP. XIV:

A Description of the Rivers.

THERE are in the Kingdom of England and Wales 555 Rivers. I cannot conceive how the number jumps so equal, or comes to be so great; but that I suppose some small Brooks and Rivulets are taken in.

Now of those 555, England alone claims the greatest share, having in it 325, though there may not be so many main streams

which either have the denomination, or the fullness and capacity of so vast a current. As to their diversities, is their situations, their distance and remoteness, or their nearness and vicinity to the Sea; so they are different both in the qualities of their water, as also their various kinds and species of fishes.

Those that have a more immediate intercourse with the ocean, partake of its influences, and have the same vicissitudes, the same fluxes and refluxes, the same salt water and the same scaly army attend them which rules and bears sway under Neptune's Government: These are too deep to be fathomed by the short cordage of a line, and therefore cannot be brought within the compass of our designed Treatise. Those that are more inland, and farther distant from the common receptacle of waters, may be brought into the lists, and fall under the notion of our intended subject.

To begin then with the nearest, and to set forth the praises of our native country, we may prefer the neighbouring Avon, which hath afforded opportunities for our frequent visits, and may challenge the greatest share of our own experience.

This river consists chiefly of Pike and Perch, some good Bream, few Carpe, Chevins, Gudgeon, Roaches, &c. and very good Eel; it is a clear, fine stream, in most places broad, and very deep. Some call it by the

name of Nine, because it hath its original from Nine Fountains, though I cannot discover above five Rivulets that flow into the increasing of it: springs indeed there are many, that join forces to augment it, the first of which arises about Daventree.

There are several other rivers that go by the name of Avon, one of which takes its course through the middle of Warwickshire.

The next in order to Avon is Welland, which may claim the second place in our description, having much encouraged our diversions, and contributed very freely towards the perfecting and compleating of this art.

These two, like loving sisters, meet and salute each other at Crowland, and then part again. The Welland cannot boast of that store and plenty of fish as her neighbour Avon; with Pike and smaller Perch she is abundantly furnished, many Bream of a middle size, store of Chubs, Dace, Gudgeons, Eels, &c. She hath many turns and windings in her current, which make her the more commodious for trolling, though slow in running; so that after a great flood, there will be no fishing for a long time.

The third and next to these, is the Ouse in Bedfordshire, a fair river and full of fish, much the same as that of Avon, a good trolling river.

From thence to the famed Cham, which gives name to our mother Academia; for historians and antiquaries say, that by setting a bridge over Cham, it was called Cambridge.

This river is broad but shallow, and is not so commodious for the troll as the cast-net; here are many Gudgeons, Ruffs, small Jacks, some Trout and Chub; great part of it is navigable, and therefore not so favourable for our sport; not only because the sailing of the vessels disturbs and thickens the waters, but because those continual motions that keep the water from settling, keep the weeds from growing, which might harbour and shelter the fish from the violence of nets. The stream of this Cham is somewhat rapid and velocious, both by reason of the shallowness of it, as also the level and straightness of it; it having but few pits and crooks which might render it serviceable for our recreation. However, if its fountains cannot send forth such waters, as will multiply and generate fishes to furnish the adjacent countries, yet from that ancient source of liberal arts and pious literature, have flowed full streams of learned sciences, which have refined all parts and corners of this land.

Next to this seminary of good education, may we place her sister Oxonia, the other nurse and breast of learning. This, as well as the other, hath the denomination from the river, the ford of Oxen; or as some derive it

Oxford, quasi Ouseford, from the river Ouse adjoining to it.

From thence we hasten to the river Swift, whether so called from the swiftness and velocity of its motion is disputable: it waters and washeth Lutterworth in Leicestershire, and then kindly greets the greater Avon.

The renowned Trent is generally known, being remarkable in the very name and derivation which some have called it, from *Triginta*, because it is stored with thirty sorts of fishes. If that be true, she must certainly borrow some of her mother's blood, the salt offspring of the sea; since there are not so many distinct kinds of fishes, that have their being and habitation in the fresh waters.

Bordering to this is the capacious Humber, and many more spreading through the Northern climate; the most ancient of which is the greater Ouse, commodious for enriching the city of York. Some say Humber is not a distinct river of itself, but only the mouth and *æstuarium* of divers rivers here confluent and meeting together, as Youre, Darwent, especially Ouse and Trent, which there change its name.

More Northerly still is the noted Tweed, on whose bank is seated the impregnable town of Berwick.

The river Tine, so famous for Newcastle, and her inexhaustible coal-pits. Kent boasts much of her princely Medway, famous for harbouring the Royal Navy.

Swift-running Severn is a glory and ornament to the city of Gloucester, than which (an ancient Author says) there is not any for channel broader, for stream swifter, or for fish better stored. There is in it a daily rage and fury of waters, which may be called a gulph or whirlpool of waves, raising up the sand from the bottom, winding and driving upon great heaps; sometimes she overfloweth her banks, and rovethe a great way upon the face of her bordering grounds, and retireth as a conqueror into her usual channels. Unhappy is the vessel which she taketh full upon the sides; for if the Watermen are aware of it, they turn the vessel upon it, and cut through the midst of it, whereby they check, and avoid that violence and danger. She is called Sabrina, from the name of a maid that was there drowned.

There are many noted rivers in Derbyshire, Lancashire, Devonshire, Shropshire, &c. the description of which would be fit for a larger Volume, and cannot be reduced into this Epitome.

The most considerable of them all may be summed up, and comprehended in these following verses.

Queen Thames the first, for Ships and Swans is
crowned;

The chrystal Trent for fords and fish renowned,
And stately Severn for her shore is praised;
Newcastle's Tine to Albion's cliffs is raised;

West Chester brags much of her holy Dee;
 The Peake her Dove, whose banks so fertile be;
 York many wonders of her Ouse can tell,
 And Kent will say her Medway doth excel;
 Cotswoll commends her Isis to the Thame;
 Our western parts extol the Avon's Fame.
 The Northern Borders boast of Tweed's fair flood,
 And the old Lee brags of Danish blood.

A Receipt to dress a Pike

TAKE your Pike and open him, rub him within with salt and claret wine, save the milt, a little of the blood and fat; cut him in two or three pieces, and put him in when the water boils; put in with him sweet marjorum, savory, time, or fennel, with a good handful of salt. Let him boil near half an hour. For the sauce, take sweet butter, anchovies, horse-radish, claret-wine, of each a good quantity, a little of the blood, shalot, or garlick; some lemon sliced, beat them well together, and serve him.

FINIS.

Norwich: Printed by J. Payne, Market-Place.

